SPORTS / A29

Federer wins 50th straight match on grass, advances in Wimbledon

SUPER/ D2

RP-bound Christina Aguilera rocks Shanghai; Super was there up close

SAT. SPECIAL / G2

The truth behind the rumors: Maria, Julius, Tintin tell all

SAT. SPECIAL / I1

PDI Man in Hollywood: Not even Daniel Radcliffe knows if Harry dies in final book

rata Guide' corrects 269 textbook errors

By Jerry E. Esplanada

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HAS COME out with a 21-page "Errata Guide" to correct glaring factual, grammatical and other errors in 11 social studies textbooks and teachers' manuals issued earlier to 43,000 public elementary schools nationwide.

Some 70,000 copies of the guide were printed

ERRATA/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Saturday, June 30, 2007 ★★ 12 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 202 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Jamby on attendance: It's 'dagdag-bawas'

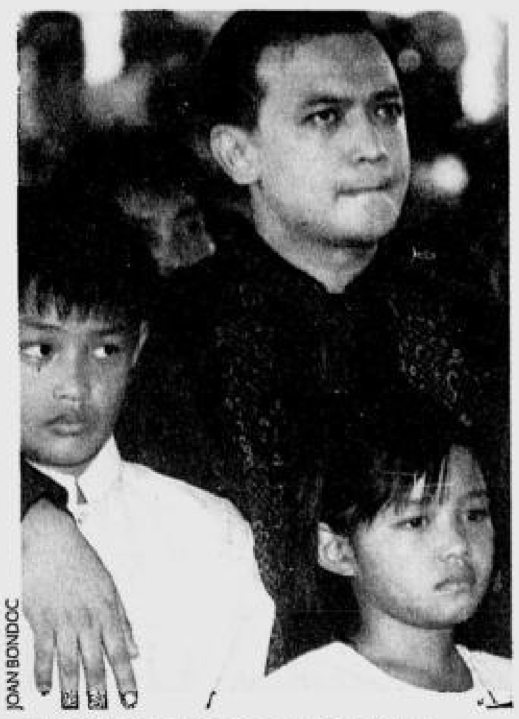
By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

HINDI LANG PALA PARASA BOTO YAN!

"DAGDAG-BAWAS" IN the Senate log?

Sen. Jamby Madrigal has taken offense at being portrayed as having the poorest attendance

JAMBY/ A13



JOAN BONDOC

BELIEVE-IT-OR-NOT- MOMENT: Trillanes elected by more than 11-M Pinoys makes history with children Francis, 9, and Estelle, 7.

Trillanes comes out with all guns blazing

By Nancy Carvajal

FIRING HIS GUNS EVEN BEFORE he takes his Senate seat, former Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes IV yesterday said Team Unity candidate Juan Miguel Zubiri was a beneficiary of election cheating—and declared he would not want "a cheat" to join him in Congress.

Trillanes hurled his accusation after he took his oath of office before Barangay 160 Chair Ruben Gatchalian at a covered court in Caloocan City, where he said he used to play basketball with neighbors, including Gatchalian.

"I believe Congressman Zubiri knows deep in his heart that he benefited from cheating. If he is decent enough, he wouldn't accept it (his possible election victory) because that is not something you want your kids to emulate," Trillanes told reporters.

"I wouldn't want a cheat to join me in the Senate, we should not tolerate it," he said.

Zubiri, locked in a close battle with Trillanes' colleague, Genuine Opposition's Aqulino "Koko" Pimentel III, for the 12th and last Senate seat, shot back at Trillanes by asking: "Look who's talking?"

"At least, I'm not someone who is charged in court with leading a rebellion, treason, coup d'etat, as well as hostaging of prominent VIPs at the Oakwood (hotel). All of these are unbailable offenses," said Zubiri.

Trillanes is in military custody facing court martial for leading a failed mutiny in 2003.

Trillanes' victory has been described as a phenomenon in Philippine politics. Unlike another former military rebel, Sen. Gregorio Honasan, the ex-Navy officer was in detention throughout the campaign, ran on a shoestring budget, and had access to the media only in the last stretch of the campaign.

Zubiri called Trillanes a "loose cannon showing his political immaturity," and urged him to consult with his advisers on the parameters of what he could or could not say, especially against his fellow senators.

"My lawyers are just waiting for the tape to study it and make the necessary charges against him since he said it on TV and not as a privilege speech," said Zubiri.

Trillanes vowed to initiate an investigation into poll fraud during

TRILLANES/ A10

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

ALL IN THE FAMILY: President Arroyo attends the oath-taking of new congressman, Dato Arroyo, her younger son, at St. James Parish in Libmanan, Camarines Sur.

GMA eyes amnesty for all

Moros, Reds, coup plotters are covered

By Michael Lim Ubac

WITH THE LEGACY OF PRESident Macapagal-Arroyo at stake, Malacañang is trying to put together a general amnesty for all "enemies" of the state—communist, military and Moro rebels.

The idea, first disclosed by Speaker Jose de Venecia over dinner with INQUIRER editors and reporters two weeks ago, has ripened into a full-blown plan, with Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita himself hinting about it yesterday.

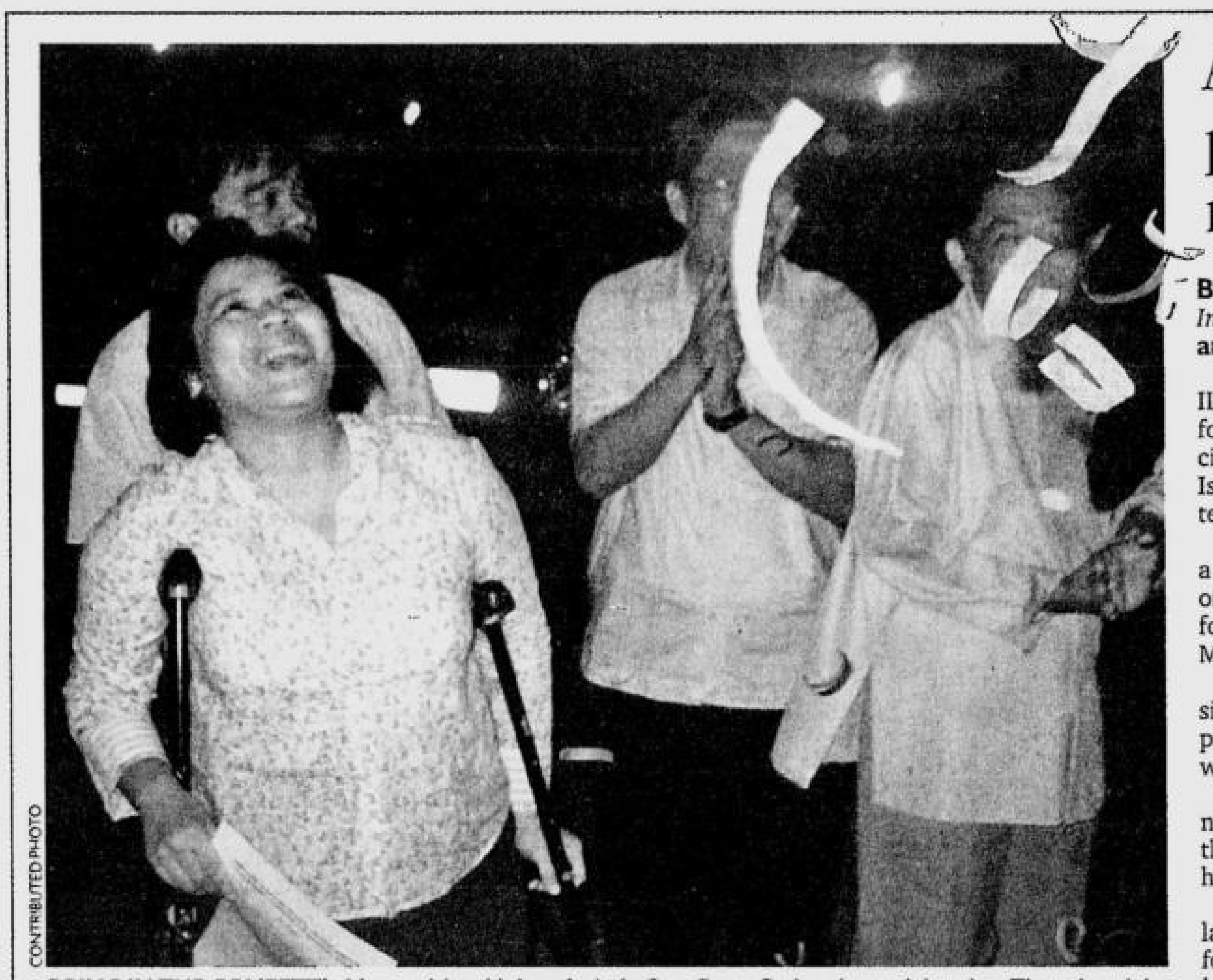
"That is not totally out of the picture but part of the peace process," Ermita said on the phone.

Ermita, who has been advocating reconciliation since before the May 14 polls, said that "somewhere towards the end there will be amnesty, but there's no instruction yet from the President."

"In due time the amnesty proclamation will be considered by the President," said Ermita.

Asked about amnesty for the MILF, he said: "Maybe yes ... you can be sure that

GMA EYES/ A10



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BRING IN THE CONFETTI. After waiting 44 days, Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca is proclaimed on Thursday night but skips the rites of proclamation as she partly blames Comelec for making her "suffer the agony of waiting."

After 44 days, Padaca proclaimed; Leviste new Batangas vice gov

By Villamor Visaya Jr. and Melvin Gascon
Inquirer Northern Luzon
and Jerome Aning, *in Manila*

ILAGAN, ISABELA—AFTER BEING KEPT HANGING for nearly seven weeks, reelectionist Gov. Maria Gracia Cielo Padaca was finally proclaimed winner of the Isabela gubernatorial fight but her rival vowed to contest the proclamation, claiming it was "railroaded."

In Manila, the Commission on Elections dismissed a petition to declare a failure of elections in the towns of Taysan and Sto. Tomas in Batangas, paving the way for the proclamation of provincial board member Mark Leviste as new Batangas vice governor.

In a 10-page decision, the Comelec's six commissioners, voting unanimously, cited lack of merit in the petition of Leviste's rival, candidate Edwin Ermita, who is a son of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita,

Padaca, 43, was proclaimed winner on Thursday night in front of cheering supporters, minutes after the provincial board of canvassers (PBOC) declared her as the winning governor.

The proclamation ended more than a month of delay, mainly caused by protests filed by Padaca's rival, former Gov. Benjamin Dy, who claimed that elections in Isabela were marred by massive fraud.

AFTER 44 DAYS/ A10

EU team: AFP, PNP need training in human rights

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPpines needs training in the observance of human rights laws and the handling of unarmed civilians caught in its counterinsurgency operations, according to a European Union team that sought to identify ways to help the Philippine government stem the tide of extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances.

While he stopped short of linking the military to the killings, Ambassador Alistair MacDonald, head of the European Commission's delegation in the Philippines, cited the need for "training in human rights awareness for the police, and more particularly for the [AFP]" among the team's recommendations.

Speaking after MacDonald at their joint press conference yesterday in Malacañang, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said: "The anti-insurgency program of the government continues to be reviewed at policy level, and [because of]

EU TEAM/ A8

Ermita dares AFP: Find Jonas Burgos

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY EDUARDO ERMITA yesterday said the military should find missing agriculturist Jonas Burgos to belie his mother's accusation that it was behind his disappearance.

Ermita also expressed confidence that the Provost Marshal's report, a copy of which Edita Burgos, Jonas' mother, had been demanding, did not focus merely on the license plates of the vehicle used in Jonas' abduction on April 28.

But Ermita backed the Armed Forces of the Philippines' reluctance to release the classified report to the Burgos family, even if, as stated on Thursday by Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro, the AFP information chief, the "restricted" document only delved into how the license plates on a jeep impounded in the Army's 56th Infantry Battalion

ERMITA/ A8

Priests suspect 'vicious drama' in Bossi kidnap

By Julie S. Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—FELLOW MISsionaries of Fr. Giancarlo Bossi yesterday showed increasing exasperation and dismay over the authorities' failure to give them a clear picture of what was happening with the kidnapped Italian priest, and voiced suspicion this was all "a vicious drama."

In a statement, Bossi's congregation, the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (PIME), also asked if conflicting reports about supposed efforts to recover the kidnapped, 57-year-old missionary might not be part of a coverup.

"We were told that both the government forces and the (Moro Islamic Liberation Front) contacts have been monitoring all possible areas, all possible armed

PRIESTS/ A12

SWS: Scale of corruption in gov't remains high but bribery going down

By Jocelyn R. Uy

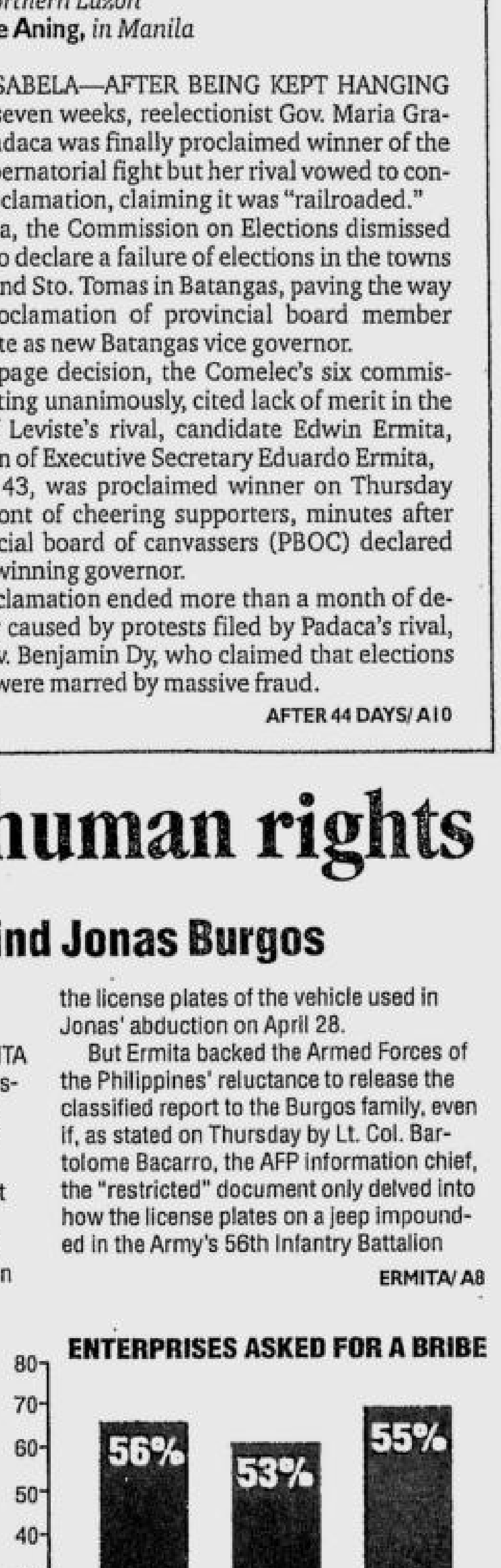
ONE OF EVERY FIVE FILIPINO MANagers say that "almost all" firms in their line of business give bribes to win government contracts, while three of every five say they were asked for a bribe on at least one transaction last year, according to a recent corruption survey of the Social Weather Stations.

One out of five managers said they believed that companies pay their taxes honestly and that the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) was the least sincere in fighting corruption, according to the SWS Business Survey on Corruption released yesterday.

The survey, the seventh of an annual series conducted by the SWS with the Makati Business Club, is part of the Transparency and Accountable Governance project of the Asia Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The survey, conducted from March 4 to May 11, interviewed the managers of 705 Filipino companies from five areas—Metro Manila, Metro Cebu,

SWS/ A10



Covers five areas: NCR, Metro Cebu, Metro Davao, Cavite-Laguna-Batangas, Cagayan de Oro-Iligan

Source: SWS

EZ2 13 20

FOUR DIGIT 2 6 3 3

SUERTRES Mid-Day 9 0 6 | Evening 3 0 6

(All in exact order)

MEGALOTTO 6/45 6 7 10 28 34 37

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Second FrontPage

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

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Sorry, but Teves just can't shut up for too long

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE MAN WHO APPEARED TO have opened a can of worms at the Commission on Appointments just can't shut up for too long.

Initially silenced by Malacañang officials, outgoing Negros Oriental Rep. Herminio Teves came out firing yesterday following the accusation that his son, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, was himself involved in extortion activities.

The elder Teves laughed off the allegation made by outgoing Representatives Prospero Pichay and Rolex Suplico, who, as members of the CA, were apparently incensed by the accusation.

Truth hurts

"The truth hurts," the 87-year-old Teves told the INQUIRER. "Even a dog, if it gets hurt, will go crazy and bite without reason."

Pichay and Suplico on Thursday made public a pending graft case against the younger Teves before the Ombudsman. During CA deliberations in October 2006, a certain lawyer named Daniel Romana accused Teves of demanding half of the P10 million he was supposedly trying to withdraw from the Land Bank of the Philippines.

Teves, then the bank's president, allegedly wanted the other hand as commission for his "friend," Reynaldo Guevarra.

The elder Teves yesterday questioned the timing of the two congressmen's allegation. "Why are they talking about this only now?"

He was confident that the public won't buy Pichay and Suplico's allegation, claiming that more and more government appointments had been "validating" his disclosure of extortion activities by certain members of the CA.

Last week, an Army general who asked not to be identified for security reasons, told the INQUIRER that an influential member of the CA had once demanded P50 million from the command service in exchange for the confirmation of its chief.

Public apology

Pichay and Suplico on Thursday asked the elder Teves to issue a public apology, noting that he was yet to present evidence to back his allegation.

"Why would I apologize for telling the truth?" he replied.

He said he was willing to participate in an official investigation, including a planned inquiry, in the coming 14th Congress. "We have to change the system of corruption and hopefully, the 14th Congress will do better."

House probe

Opposition Rep. Rufus Rodriguez of Cagayan de Oro yesterday said he would file on Monday a resolution calling for the creation of an ad-hoc committee to look into the alleged extortion racket within the CA.

He suggested that the special committee be composed of seven members, headed by a three-term congressman. The rest of the group should have three lawmakers from the administration and three from the opposition, he said.

"The House of Representatives should look into the matter because it tends to besmirch Congress as an institution," he said. "We should recommend prosecution to the guilty and improve the image of Congress."

PROTEST AGAINST KILLINGS
Members of the League of Filipino Students lay on the ground acting as dead bodies at the steps of Palma Hall in the University of the Philippines Friday to protest political killings in the country. JHOAN BONDOC

JUNK the ANTI-TERROR LAW!

Maguindanao tally 'railroaded'–Koko

By Nikko Dizon

THE SCANDAL-RIDDEN MAGUINDANAO vote tallies were finally canvassed yesterday afternoon by the Commission on Elections en banc, sitting as the National Board of Canvassers, in proceedings that Genuine Opposition (GO) candidate Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel said was "expected to be railroaded."

Nonetheless, Pimentel managed to cling to the 12th spot after the Maguindanao returns were canvassed, leading Team Unity's Juan Miguel Zubiri by a measly 4,293 votes.

"I am not surprised at what happened here. We expected this railroading that's why we went to the Supreme Court. Unfortunately, we were not given a TRO (Temporary Restraining Order) so we are witnessing the railroading of an elaborate scheme to launder election results," Pimentel told reporters after the canvassing.

The Maguindanao returns were canvassed after two hours of heated exchange between GO lawyers Sixto Brillantes and Leila de Lima, who wanted to question the due execution of the municipal vote tallies from the 22 towns of Maguindanao and the NBC, led by Comelec chairman Benjamin Abalos Sr.

Abalos denied all motions made by the GO lawyers, who insisted that the Maguindanao results were manufactured.

Not lost hope

By Pimentel's own estimation, he "has not lost hope" after the Maguindanao canvass because he was still leading Zubiri by some 6,000 votes.

But he said it was still "unfair" to him because his 133,000 lead simply "vanished because of manufactured results."

"The 6,000 votes is a dangerously low level of lead and could be overhauled by still unaccounted precincts and towns," Pimentel said.

'Ammunition'

Pimentel said the Comelec's "railroading" of the Maguindanao canvassing in fact gave him another round of "ammunition" to bring before the Supreme Court, which gave him 10 days to file his motion for reconsideration after the High Court denied his petition to stop the Maguindanao canvassing.

"What happened here, this is what we will submit to the SC. We will get a transcript. I will show them (Supreme Court) what they did not see in my initial petition. They did not see the end of the railroad tracks. Now, it can be seen very clearly. The train is here. It's now in the station," Pimentel told reporters in Filipino.

Comelec Commissioner Resurreccion Borra took exception to Pimentel's accusation that the Comelec "railroaded" yesterday's proceedings.

"If we effectively follow the rules, we are accused of railroading. Where should we go now?" Borra said.

Nowhere in sight

Borra added that a proclamation of the 12th senator was still nowhere in sight.

"This is going to be a photofinish competition," Borra said, adding that there had been instances when a senator was proclaimed in July, way beyond the June 30 expiration of term of senators.

Borra said the Comelec still has to canvass returns from Barira in Shariff Kabunsuan, Bogo in Cebu, and Bais in Negros Oriental. Canvassing will resume on Monday.

Despite the rebuffs from the NBC, an already high strung De Lima continued to strongly argue, prompting Abalos to tell her she was out of order.

Comelec commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer told her to take her seat or the commission would call security.

Bayan Muna counsel, Neri Colmenares, told the NBC that based on the Election Automation Law of 2007, the second copy of the municipal CoCs, which are for posting for 48 hours after the counting, are never used for canvassing because "anybody could have tampered with them."

Brillantes, for his part, asked for an executive session where he told the commissioners he would reveal the evidence of poll fraud in Maguindanao.

Brillantes said he wanted an executive session because what he would say could "possibly land everyone in jail."

But it was a supposed bombshell that Ferrer and TU counsel George Garcia downplayed.

They said it could probably be just an "outburst" of the GO lawyer.

Palace elated over SC rule denying Pimentel petition

MALACAÑANG EXPRESSED ELATION yesterday that the Supreme Court has denied Genuine Opposition candidate Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III's petition to stop the recount of the Maguindanao votes which enabled Team Unity's Juan Miguel Zubiri to clinch the 12th and last spot in the senatorial race.

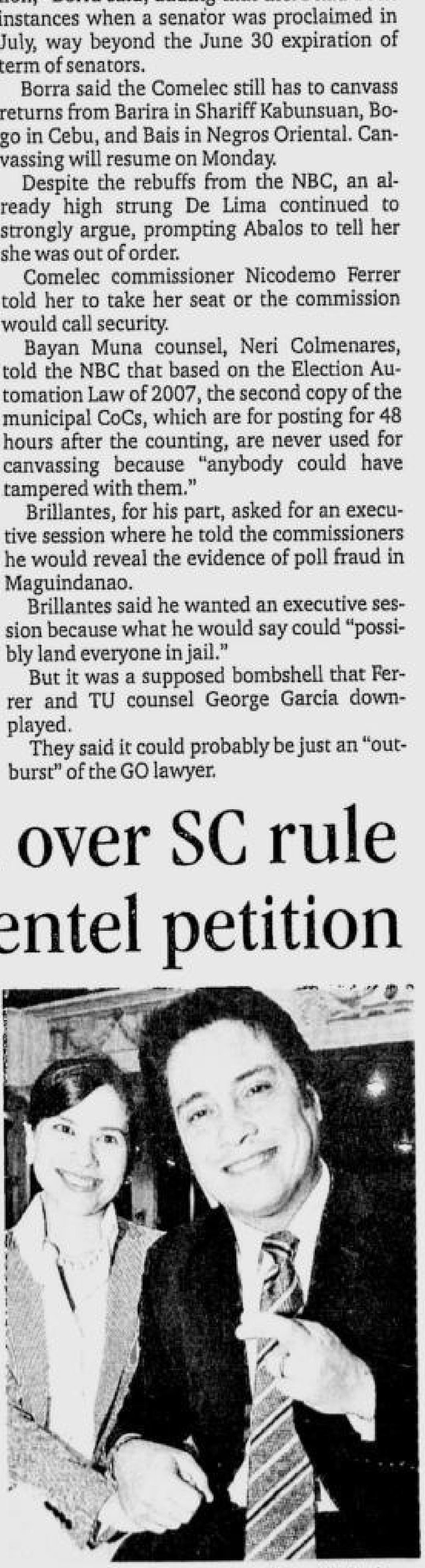
"It's quite obvious by now, according to the papers, that the Supreme Court has not issued a TRO and that could very well lead to something else that Migz Zubiri has reasons to be happy about," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said when asked by reporters.

"We are happy for him," Ermita added.

Ermita reminded reporters that he predicted the votes from Mindanao will determine the last winners. "Migz Zubiri happens to be from Mindanao, right?," Ermita said.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court has cited the constitutional powers of the Commission on Elections to enforce poll-related regulations in rejecting Pimetel's request.

The high tribunal also pointed out there was no proof of Pimentel's allegations that the election documents being canvassed were manufactured. *Juliet Labog-Javellana and Leila Salaverria*



A JUBILANT Miguel Zubiri with wife Audrey at the Supreme Court Thursday. REM ZAMORA

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PNP prepares for human security act

By Alcuin Papa

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP) is working double time to disseminate to its 117,000-strong police force the provisions of the Human Security Act, or the antiterror law, which will take effect next month.

Chief Superintendent German Doria, head of the PNP's human rights desk, said the PNP is bracing itself for implementation of the new law by July 14.

"We are working double time to conduct seminars so we can inform our forces in the field of the content of the new law," Doria told the INQUIRER.

But one problem facing the PNP, Doria said, is that they have not received a copy of the law's implementing rules and regulations (IRR).

Doria said he has a copy of a draft of the IRR. But it has yet to be finalized by a technical working group under the Palace.

Nonetheless, Doria said they are conducting their seminars on the new law at all levels nationwide.

"We have had seminars but there is a need to reiterate the provisions of the law so our personnel will be knowledgeable," Doria said.

So far, he said the PNP's Special Action Force (SAF) and the Regional Mobile Groups (RMGs) have attended the seminars.

Doria said these are the units who are at the forefront of the anti-insurgency operations.

He reiterated that under the new law there would be stiffer sanctions on policemen violating human rights.

Doria's office is now busy setting up a human rights desk in every regional command of the PNP.

The Human Security Act was signed into law by President Macapagal-Arroyo, a close ally of the US's war on global terror. She called the law a vital cornerstone in the country's fight against global terrorism since terrorism would now be considered a crime.

The President said the new antiterror law would spell the defeat of terror groups like the Abu Sayyaf and its foreign affiliate the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI).

Under the law, the crime of terrorism includes piracy in general or mutiny in high seas; rebellion or insurrection; coup d'etat, including acts committed by private persons; murder; kidnapping and serious illegal detention; and, crimes involving destruction such as arson.

The crime of terrorism is punishable by 40 years of imprisonment without the benefit of parole.

The PNP had been pushing the passage of the law to impose stricter sanctions on captured terrorists.

Erap allowed to attend JV's oath-taking

THE SANDIGANBAYAN SPECIAL DIVISION yesterday allowed detained former President Joseph Estrada to attend today's oath-taking of his son, San Juan City Mayor-elect Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito.

Estrada, 70, got a seven-hour pass for the event which starts at 8 a.m. and doubles as celebration of the town's recent upgrade into a city.

The court order said the former president may leave his rest house in Tanay, Rizal, where he is currently detained, at 6 a.m. and should be back by 1 p.m.

The Sandiganbayan acknowledged the elder Estrada's past stint as San Juan mayor and the assurance from his camp that the event will be "a historic non-politically partisan occasion."

On Thursday, however, the court denied Estrada's separate request to attend the oath-taking of Manila Mayor-elect Alfredo Lim, which was also scheduled at noon today at the Liwasang Bonifacio. *Volt Contreras*

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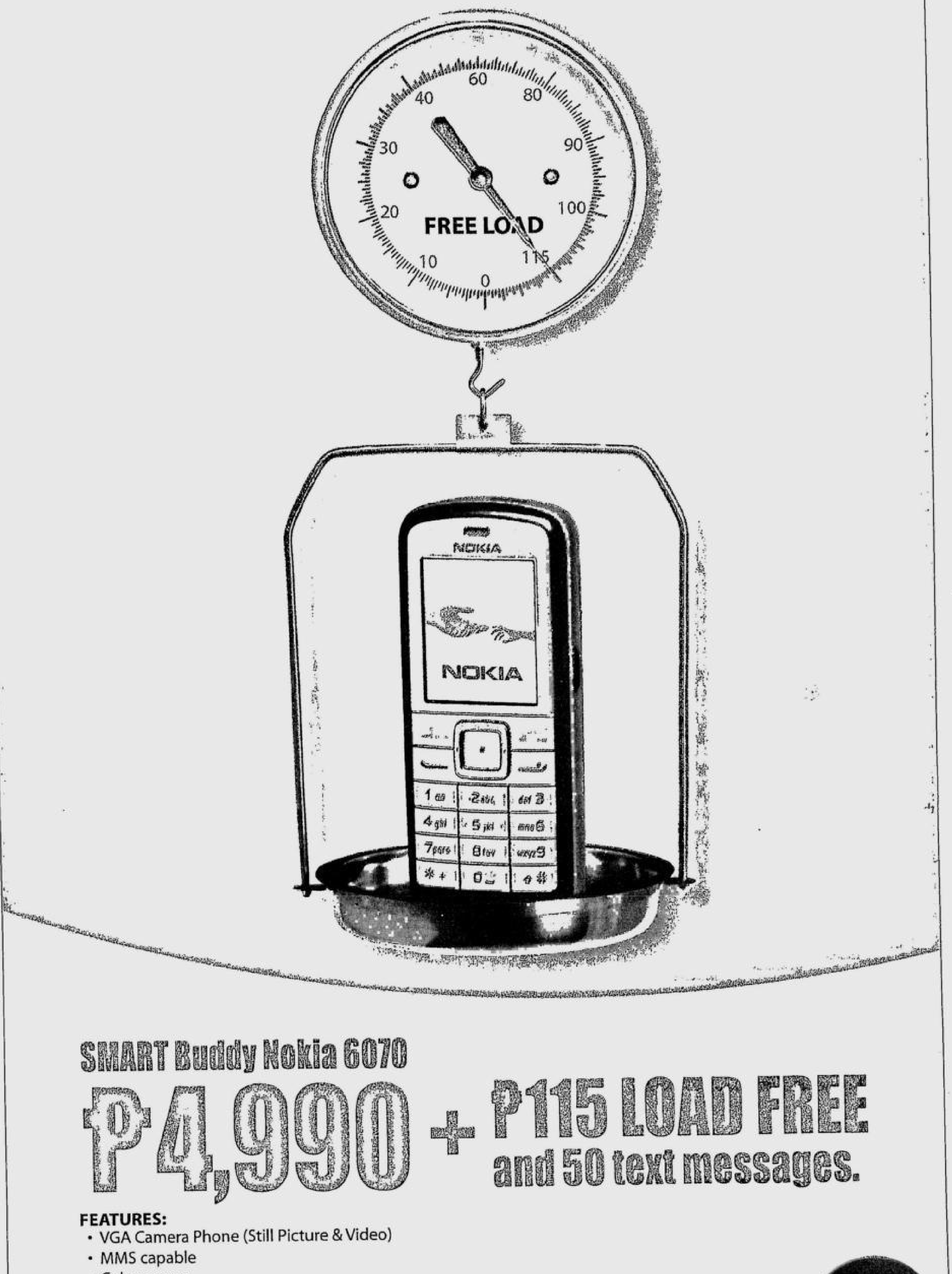

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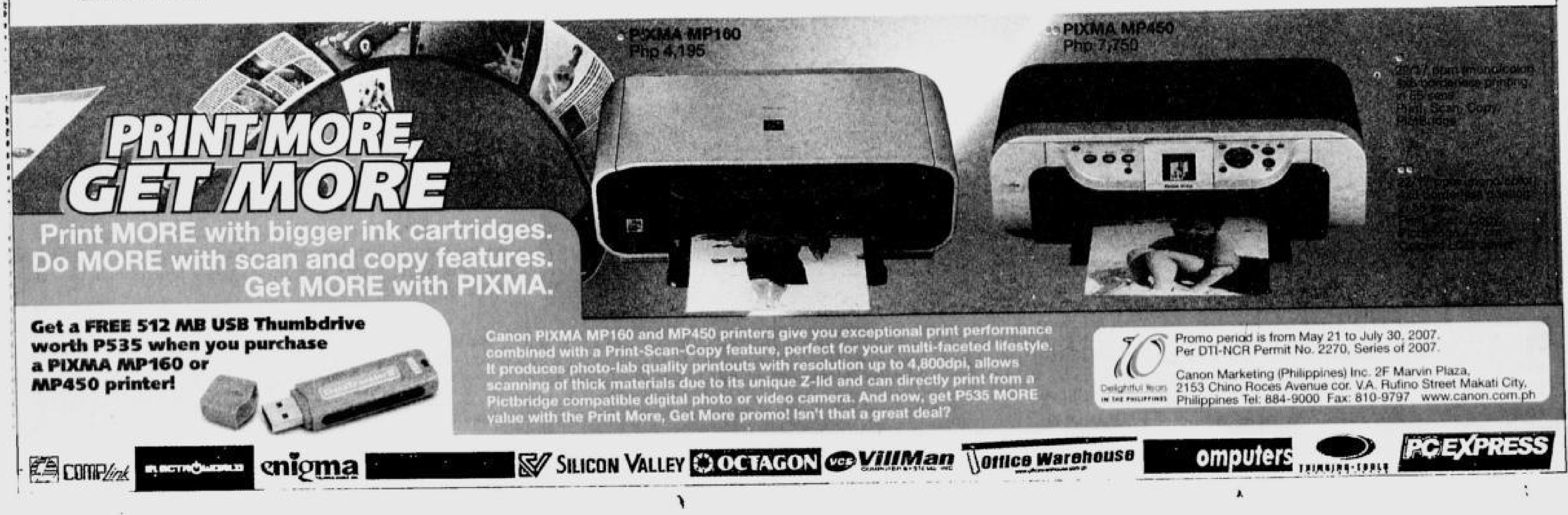

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Flour-based products from China probed for chemical contamination

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH YESterday ordered an investigation to verify reports that some flour-based products from China which were shipped into the country are contaminated with harmful chemicals.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said the Bureau of Food and Drugs was already looking into the reports, which involved "flour-based products and biscuits from China."

"The public should just buy locally manufactured products (until the allegedly affected products are tested), Duque told the INQUIRER yesterday.

On Wednesday, China closed down 180 food factories after inspectors found that industrial chemicals, such as formaldehyde, were being used to make candy, pickles, crackers and seafood.

Huge levels of toxins

International concerns over China's food safety problems ballooned this year after huge levels of toxins and industrial chemicals were found in exported products.

The US Food and Drugs Administration recently warned consumers about lead paint in toy trains, defective tires, and toothpaste made with diethylene glycol, a toxic ingredient more commonly found in antifreeze. All the products were imported from China.

The China-made toothpaste has been rejected by several countries in North and South America and Asia, while Chinese wheat gluten tainted with the chemical melamine was blamed for dog and cat deaths in North America.

Farmed seafood has now joined tires, toothpaste and toy trains on the list of tainted and defective products from China that could be hazardous to a person's health.

US government health officials said Thursday they were detaining three types of Chinese fish—catfish, basa and dace—as well as shrimp and eel after repeated testing turned up contamination with drugs unapproved in the United States for use in farmed seafood.

Traces of drugs

The FDA said sampling of Chinese imported fish between October and May repeatedly found traces of the antibiotics nitrofuran and fluoroquinolone, as well as the antifungals malachite green and gentian violet. Of particular concern are the fluoroquinolones, a family of widely used human antibiotics that the FDA forbids in seafood in part to prevent bacteria from developing resistance to these important drugs.

"Clearly the addition of these drugs, it's a deliberate event," Margaret Glavin, the FDA's associate commissioner for regulatory affairs, told reporters. "If they stop adding them, the problem is going to go away."

The FDA acted after finding problems with 15 percent of the Chinese seafood it tested. Glavin said the FDA also has found companies in the Philippines and Mexico using the drugs and has issued similar import alerts for those firms' products.

China is the third largest exporter of seafood to the United States, according to the FDA. More than half of its global seafood exports are farmed. But the FDA inspects only about 5 percent of farmed Chinese fish, agency officials said.

Sought for comment, BFAD deputy director Joshua Ramos said they would "write a letter to the Chinese Embassy to make an official inquiry."

He said they had already done some "filtering," where they asked firms to declare if they were using principal products sourced from China.

"This is a precautionary measure," Ramos said.

He advised consumers, as a general rule, to look for food and drug registration numbers in the products made in China they are buying. "These alphanumeric codes would assure consumers the products passed through checking of BFAD."

He said consumers could also call BFAD to verify if a certain product had been approved.

The BFAD earlier ordered the recall of millions of cans and boxes of infant formula manufactured by multinational milk company Wyeth, saying the products posed a "potential health risk."

The affected stocks which were manufactured between May 23 to July 26, 2006 developed rust and molds in the outer can, the BFAD said. Wyeth was given until July 11 to completely recall its affected products.

With AP report

'Immoral' ex-clerk of court fined, barred from gov't

By Leila B. Salaverria

A FORMER COURT OF APPEALS clerk of court found to have been carrying on a "scandalous" affair with a married co-worker for five years has been barred from serving in all government branches and ordered to pay a fine equivalent to one year of his salary.

The Supreme Court, which found former Division Clerk of Court Antolin Dabon Jr. guilty of gross immoral conduct and of violating an administrative rule, said the accused also used his position to "harass" his former paramour when she tried to break off the relationship.

Dabon should also have been dismissed from service had he not resigned before the case against him was decided, according to the high tribunal. It upheld the findings of the investigating justice but increased the penalty that was originally recommended.

The complaint against Dabon was filed by the husband of the woman who had an affair with the clerk of court from November 2000 to March 2006.

Scandalous circumstances

"There is no dispute that respondent engaged in an unlawful, dishonest and immoral conduct. The illicit relationship which spanned a period of five years was committed under scandalous circumstances as to shock the common sense of decency," the high court said in a June 22 decision.

It added that being a division clerk of court, Dabon's position entailed great responsibility and he was supposed to act with dignity and propriety at all times. "Unfortunately, respondent miserably failed to comply with the demands of his office," it said.

The tribunal said Dabon also violated the administrative rule requiring court employees to secure a travel authority before going abroad. He also evaded the court processes with regard to his investigation, thereby aggravating his offense, it added.

According to the high court, Dabon harassed the woman after she decided to end their relationship. It said he boarded her car to insist that the two of them talk. Because he refused to leave the vehicle, the woman made a scene and drew the attention of people in the area.

He also tried to bring the woman to a motel even if she no longer wanted to be with him, the high court added.

Lustful quest

"Despite being rejected in view of (the woman's name) apparent intention to end the affair, respondent persisted in his lustful quest by bringing her to a motel against her will. Not only did he transgress the norms of decency expected of every person but he failed to live up to the high moral standard expected of a court employee," it said.

Dabon also used his position and asked court employees to relay messages to the woman and to intervene in their "purely personal affair," thus aggravating his offense, according to the high court. It also said Dabon could not claim that he did not know about the administrative case filed against him.

The court noted that Dabon left the Philippines a day after the case was filed and spoke about the possibility of a fellow lawyer being used to testify against him.

When the high court tried to serve court documents to him, people at his house refused to receive the papers. Mail left at his last two known addresses in the country were sent back although these had been opened.

Corrections

IN THE June 29 issue, a Business story on Page B6—'San Miguel eyes 10 grain centers'—mistakenly attributed statements to Frisco Malabanan in a briefing. The statements were obtained from Agriculture Assistant Secretary Dennis Araullo in an interview.

***

IN THE same issue, a story on Page A10—'Abalos: Bedol to surrender today'—misstated that Ben-hur Abalos is the reelected mayor of Mandaluyong City. Abalos was a congressman before his election as mayor in May.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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WHO warns vs malaria, dengue

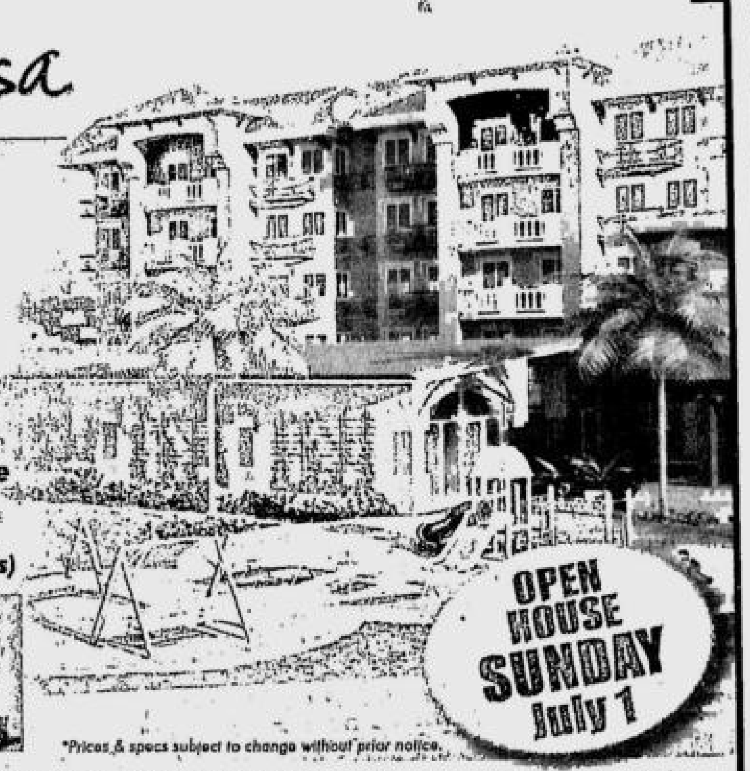
THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION YESterday warned that global warming could increase threats of malaria and dengue fever.

"Among the potential effects of global warming would be the appearance of mosquitoes where they were previously absent, with the accompanying threat of malaria and dengue fever," WHO said.

WHO is organizing a forum among international experts in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia next week to address health threats posed by global warming. Representatives from 14 countries will attend the meeting.

In a statement, WHO said that climate change "directly or indirectly contributes to about 77,000 deaths annually in Asia and the Pacific."

"We have now reached a critical stage in which global warming has already seriously impacted lives and health, and this problem will pose an even greater threat to mankind in coming decades if we fail to act now," WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific Shigeru Omi said. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*



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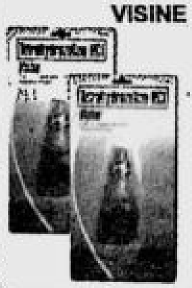

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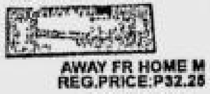

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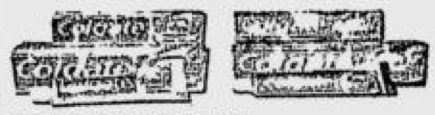

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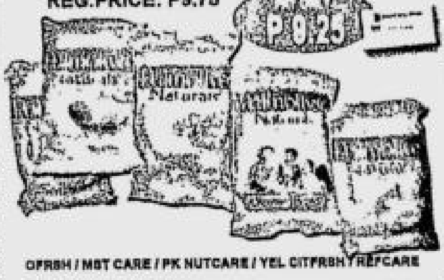

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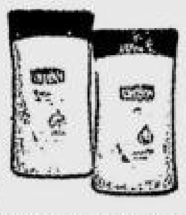

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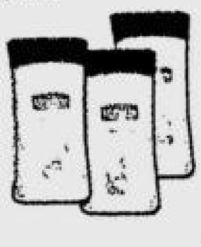

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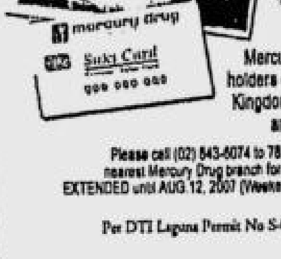

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DENR gives Taal spa firm 1 week ultimatum

By Volt Contreras

TWO DAYS AFTER SUSPENDING the environmental clearance certificate issued to the Taal spa project of a Korean firm, Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes yesterday gave the company a one-week ultimatum to secure the other permits required under the ECC.

Failure to obtain permits from other government agencies by the end of office hours on July 5 would result in the cancellation of the ECC previously granted to Jung Ang Interventure Corp., Reyes said.

Among the permits required in the ECC are those from the Department of Tourism, the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board, the National Water Resources Board, and the Protected Area Management Bureau, among others.

Critics of the project, who thought they have heard the last of the project with the suspension of the ECC on Wednesday, are expected to assail Reyes' latest move and make good earlier threats to file graft charges against the DENR chief.

The ECC was issued by the DENR's Region IV-A office in November last year. Construction works for the spa venture started late last month.

But the ECC was suspended after Reyes inspected the site and held a dialogue with protesting residents, who claimed they were not consulted about the project by its chief proponent, Talisay, Batangas Mayor Florencio Manimtim Jr.

The country's chief volcanologist and seismologist yesterday agreed with the ECC's suspension, saying it was only right that environment officials stopped the construction of a spa complex at Taal volcano.

Renato Solidum, chief of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, maintained that it was a big no-no to put up structures in areas deemed as permanent danger zones as this would endanger lives of people.

"And also (putting up structures) at the crater. The crater is the most dangerous part of a volcano," Solidum told reporters after attending a briefing by the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC).

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, which had issued clearance for the project, has suspended construction work by South Korean firm Jung Aung Inverventure at the crater rim of the volcano.

Solidum said it was not safe to build structures at Taal volcano, especially since it was one of the most active volcanoes in the country.

The last time Taal volcano erupted was in 1977 but Solidum said that the volcano remains at alert level one to this day which meant that it was "abnormal."

"It is considered a permanent danger zone, meaning Philvocs do not recommend the building of structures there where you let people stay for a longer period of time," he said.

Solidum noted that since there were many "hot grounds" at Taal volcano, construction workers should make sure they would not end up digging "steaming vents" as these could trigger steam and hot water to come out and thus, may affect the workers. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

THE MAYON volcano, seen through the window of a plane, spews white ash on Thursday.

AP

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Fool-proof diploma paper eyed

By Michael Lim Ubac

IN A BID TO CURB THE PROLIFERATION of fake diplomas and kill the fake-papers industry centered along Recto Avenue in Manila, the National Printing Office (NPO) and the Commission on Higher Education (Ched) signed a memorandum of agreement Thursday seeking the use of "highly securitized paper" for college documents.

NPO, the agency that prints government forms, said the same security features applied in the printing of ballots, election returns and certificates of canvass, would be used in the manufacture of diplomas.

The features include the use of water marks, bar code and other high-tech printing technology previously utilized only in the printing of currencies.

Fake doctorate

"Our aim is to put them out of business, and that people will no longer patronize them," said NPO chief Felipe Evardone, summing up the government's response to the ready made counterfeit college diplomas sold openly along the stretch of Claro M. Recto Avenue in Manila.

Evardone said the "Recto University" had given "a bad name to the patriot and statesman" Claro M. Recto, and the country as well.

According to Evardone, some higher institutions of learning have complained of lecturers and even professors gaining teaching positions by virtue of a fake doctorate or a master's degree, courtesy of fakers along Recto.

For as long as anyone could remember, C. M. Recto Avenue has been home to the "diploma mill" where a University of the Philippines diploma will cost the unschooled only about P1,500.

Authentic

For an additional sum, the jobseeker or would-be overseas worker can have a newly minted TOR, or transcript of records, complete with flat 1 grades, and signatures of the college secretary, the university chancellor and the president for that authentic look.

The MOA signed by Evardone and Ched chair Carlito Puno bound the two agencies "to securitize all higher education documents," including diplomas, TOR, special orders and certificates.

"This takes effect this year," said Evardone.

"The move will aim to securitize the paper itself," he said. He explained that the NPO would not use the ordinary parchment paper bought from bookstores. "This securitized paper has fibers and water marks embedded during the manufacturing of the paper itself."

Under ordinary light, the water marks will appear as a "shadow," but the Ched logo will appear when the document is seen under a blue light.

Using the technology "void panthograph," Evardone said, the word "void" would appear should the document be photocopied.

"So it can't be duplicated. This will make it tamper-proof and authentic; it thus can't be copied by Recto (counterfeiters)," he said.

Under the second phase of the scheme the printing of the document itself will go through several processes.

First is the use of the bar code at the front or back of the document, which when scanned will provide the name of the student, student number, course and "all data necessary to make it personalized."

Since the Recto diploma mill utilizes "cut and paste" technology to copy signatures of college officials, the new system will employ specialized ink, called a "thermochromic ink," which changes its color based on temperature, and "color shifting ink, which shift colors depending on one's point of view."

A third security detail to be employed is the use of "MicroText" which Evardone described as "one thin line which can't be seen by the naked eye, but only through a microscope."

A fourth security feature involves the use of "guilloch curves," the colored curves and twists found in most peso bills.

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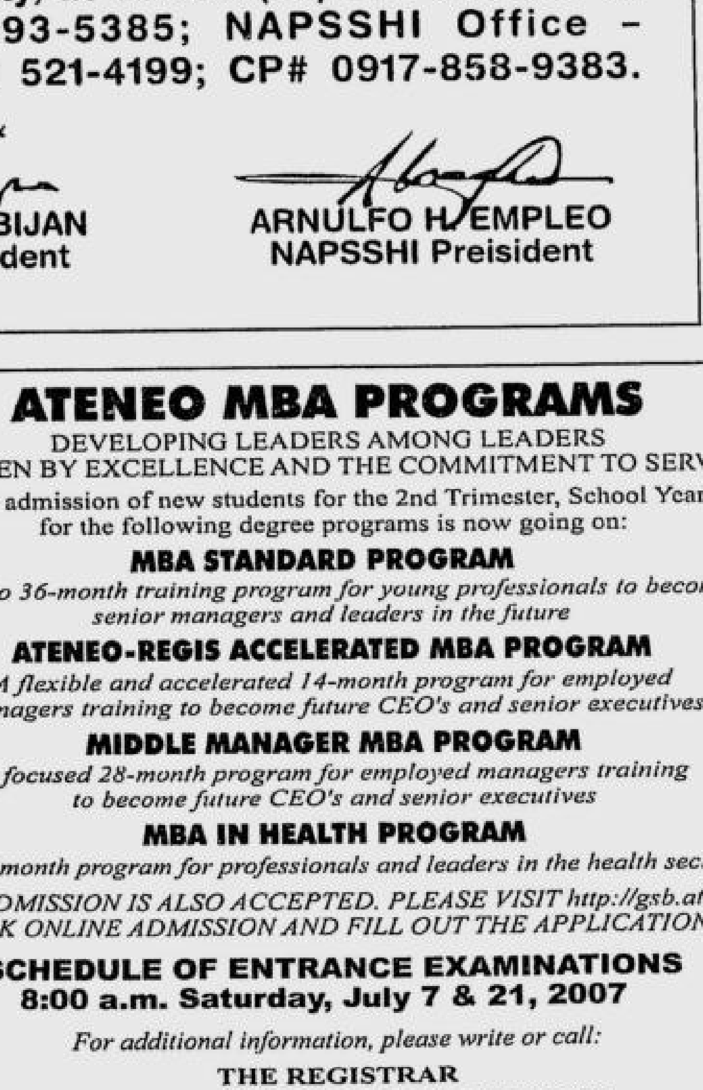

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SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

PNP men to boost campaign vs drugs

By Alcuin Papa

THE PHILIPPINE DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY (PDEA) was given a new lease on life after the Philippine National Police (PNP) agreed to lend some 200 policemen to the anti-drug body.

According to the law that created the PDEA, policemen assigned with the PDEA are supposed to return to their mother units by July 4. This would have crippled the PDEA's operations.

PNP Chief Director General Oscar Calderon said he needed the policemen for the PNP's drive against criminality.

Yesterday, however, Calderon told PDEA director-general Dioniosio Santiago that the PDEA can have the services of around 200 policemen until the agency is fully functional.

Santiago said he is giving himself up to December 2008 to do this.

To be fully functional, the PDEA would need a personnel contingent of 1,900 and a budget of P600 million.

"We are working things out and we will comply with the law," Santiago said.

PDEA chief of staff Supt. Benjie Magalong also said the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) has promised to increase by 10 percent the PDEA's P151 million reenacted budget for 2007.

High profile targets

He said the 2008 PDEA budget has yet to be approved.

For now, Santiago said he has "downgraded" the PDEA's regional offices, reducing the number from around 70 to 12, or one per region.

He added that the PDEA would have to focus on "high-profile" targets to make sure the campaign against drugs does not falter.

Under the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002, or RA 9165, the PDEA has five years to be fully operational with a full complement of antidrug operatives.

The PDEA said it submitted its organizational structure to the DBM way back in 2003 but the budget office has yet to approve it. The organizational structure is a requirement for the release of the PDEA's budget.

Recently, the PDEA got a boost from the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) which promised to allocate P90.4 million for the agency. The funds are to come from the P1 billion antigraft fund provided by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The PDEA has already established its own academy to train antidrug operatives. An initial batch of 60 graduates is due to be absorbed into the PDEA.

Solon sees Congress OK of RP vets bill

A PENDING BILL IN THE US Congress that seeks to grant equal pension benefits to Filipino World War II veterans may be approved this year, according to Sen. Richard Gordon.

Gordon, who is in the United States, said he was optimistic that the Filipino Veterans Equity Act bill that Filipino war veterans have lobbied for many years may finally be passed.

The US Senate Veterans Affairs Committee approved on Wednesday a $350 monthly pension for unmarried Filipino veterans and up to $450 plus disability and medical benefits for married veterans.

The pension will be granted to veterans who reside in the US and in the Philippines.

Gordon said he has met with Senators Daniel Akaka, Daniel Inouye and Representatives Bob Filner and Dana Rorabacher, all advocates of the equity bill.

"Filipino-Americans have done a great job in dropping the baggage of divisiveness. It only shows that if we work together, we can achieve positive results," Gordon said in a statement from Washington D.C.

As guest of honor at the vin d'honneur hosted by the Philippine Embassy in Washington D.C. during the Philippine Independence Day celebration, Gordon underscored the importance of the passage of the Filipino Veterans Equity Act bill.

"This legislation means the long overdue recognition of the important contribution of Filipinos during the (World War II) will finally be given to them. This is a fight for the dignity and respect that our veterans truly deserve," he said. *Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

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We will be awarding first, second, and third place winners for each of the 10 categories, for a total of 30 winners. The awards ceremony will also feature an exhibit of the winning photographs.

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EU team: AFP, PNP need training in human rights

From page A1

the phenomenon of these extrajudicial killings, there is a need to review the policy." *(See related story on this page.)*

Ermita also said he would inform the AFP leadership of MacDonald's recommendation.

But he told reporters that this was not an admission that the counterinsurgency policy was the cause of the extrajudicial killings.

MacDonald spoke for the 6-member EU Needs Assessment Mission (EU-NAM) at the joint press conference with Ermita, Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol, and Undersecretary Coco Quisumbing, executive director of the Presidential Commission on Human Rights.

He was accompanied by Rolf Saligmann, deputy chief of mission of Germany, which holds the 6-month rotating presidency of the EU.

The EU-NAM, here on the invitation of the Philippine government, met with various government agencies, the military, civil society groups, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, and the human rights group Karapatan during its 10-day mission that included visits to the provinces of Pampanga and Sorsogon.

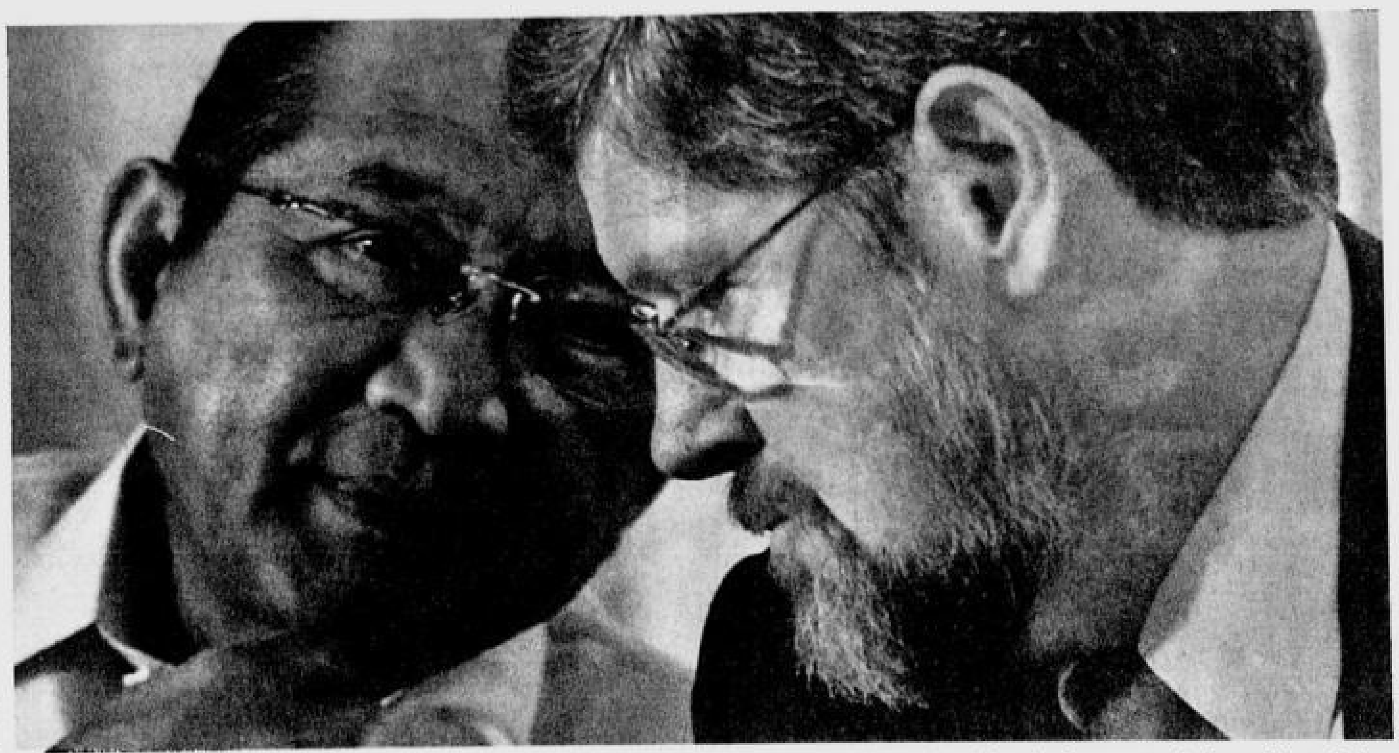
Sense of pride

Asked how the military had received the EU-NAM, MacDonald said: "We didn't have a military person in the team but one impression that the members reported to me was ... [the] tremendous sense of pride within the [AFP] at all levels regarding their role as defenders of the state against the enemies of the state.

"And the expression of that pride often seems to dominate the attitudes which the team saw. In addition, it was very clear to the team—and it was acknowledged by senior representatives of the military—that there is a great need for more awareness of human rights laws, of international humanitarian laws, of the law of armed conflict, of how to deal with civilians who are not bearing arms caught up in the conflict or the counterinsurgency campaign.

"So that awareness is there, even if there is quite a long road yet to be traveled."

United Nations Special Rapporteur Philip Alston, who had earlier made a scathing report on the extrajudicial killings, described the AFP as being in a state of denial over the issue.



RISING INTERNATIONAL CONCERN over the continued disappearances and killings of activists in the country is the subject of the press conference jointly held by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Alistair MacDonald, head of the European Commission delegation to the Philippines on Friday.

REUTERS

Will plus money

MacDonald said that the extrajudicial killings remained a serious problem hurting the image of the Philippines abroad, and that the government should "be ready to provide the financial resources to match the political will" to stop the killings.

He also said the government should secure the trust and confidence of civil society if it wanted to succeed:

"Through a combination of the will [and] the resources of the state, of the continued vigilance of civil society and of international support for the government and for civil society, it will be possible to solve this problem ... of protecting the rights of Philippine citizens and protecting the image of the Philippines."

MacDonald took pains to emphasize that the EU-NAM was not a fact-finding or investigative mission:

"The Philippine government has reiterated its determination to stamp out the plague of extrajudicial killings, and invited the EU to consider providing technical assistance to strengthen the capability of Philippine institutions to address these issues."

He said the EU might be able to lend technical assistance in improving criminal investigation and prosecution, strengthening the government witness protection program and the Commission on Human Rights, and training the military in international humanitarian laws.

Seeking help

MacDonald said the fact that the government had invited the EU was an admission that it was not satisfied with the handling of the cases and was seeking help from the international community.

"In that context, I would like to thank the government for acknowledging that a special effort is needed to bring to an end this spate of killings of human rights defenders, journalists, activists, [and other] citizens of the Philippines, which risk damaging the international reputation of this country," he said in his opening statement.

"To stop the killings, to identify and prosecute the perpetrators, is the responsibility of the Philippine government—and of Philippine society more generally. It's not some foreign adviser who is going to bring the magic solution. But the government has acknowledged that there is a serious problem, and has confirmed its determination to address this. And it's in that context that the EU stands ready to help," he said.

Club of rogue countries

MacDonald said it was imperative that the government address the killings if it were to salvage its image abroad.

"There is a club of countries which is not very well respected. I think the Philippines is far from being in such a club. There are countries around the world where the human rights situation in general is much worse. But the fact remains that these killings are clearly taking place in large numbers; the fact remains that abductions are taking place," he said.

MacDonald said the EU team was aware of the Alston report, the Melo Commission report, the actions taken by President Macapagal-Arroyo to address the problem, as well as the planned summit of the Supreme Court.

"Nevertheless, a serious problem remains. Killings continue, abductions continue, and very few perpetrators have been convicted and brought to justice. So there is a great deal to be done in order to make concrete progress in prosecuting these killers," he said, pointing out that the solution rate for the extrajudicial killings was much less than that for other killings.

100 mediamen killed in 6 mos.

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM—ONE HUNDRED journalists and media workers—including four in the Philippines—were killed in the first six months of this year, putting 2007 on the path of becoming the deadliest year for the news media, the International News Safety Institute said Friday.

The 100-mark was reached Tuesday in Iraq—the most dangerous country for the news media in modern times—with the killing of Hamed Sarha, a 30-year veteran of the Iraqi national news agency, who was shot by unidentified gunmen, a statement said.

It said 83 journalists and 17 other media professionals died covering news stories between Jan. 1 and June 26. This compares with 68 deaths at the same time last year.

INSI said 2006 was the worst year on record with 168 murders and other work-related deaths among journalists and media professionals.

In Iraq, 22 journalists and support staff were murdered in the first six months of this year, while 14 others died in conflict-related incidents.

After Iraq, the countries where most journalists were murdered in the first half of this year were Afghanistan (5), Haiti and the Philippines (4 each), Somalia, Palestine and India (3) and Sri Lanka, Mexico and Brazil (2).

INSI director Rodney Pinder said: "We have never known such a high death toll halfway through a year, and we fear for what might be to come." *AP*

Ermita dares AFP: Find Jonas Burgos

From page A1

headquarters in Bulacan ended up on the abductors' getaway vehicle.

"No, no, no. Not just the missing plate. I'm sure there are investigations going on in the other aspect of the case—the issue of locating who was responsible for [the disappearance of] Jonas, the background, and how to recover him," Ermita said of the report.

He added: "It is a challenge to the military that we be able to locate Jonas Burgos because they are pointing an accusing [finger] at the military... I think it behooves the AFP to prove that it is doing something to address the problem."

Ermita said he had been told by AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. and the commanding general of the Army that another inquiry was being conducted into allegations that Army units were involved in Jonas' abduction.

"So I'm very sure the report will not only be about the missing plate but also about inquiries into the case of Jonas," he said.

Ermita met with Edita Burgos in Malacañang last month and promised to help find her son. Ermita said Jonas' father, the late press freedom icon Jose Burgos, was his long-time friend and he even stood as sponsor for another of the Burgos sons.

Still, Ermita said it would be up to the AFP to decide whether it would release its classified report to the Burgoses.

"You know, normally, military reports are classified either as restricted, confidential, secret or top secret. So leave it to the AFP chief of staff to determine what reports can be [released] to the public," he said, adding:

"But we cannot blame also the people affected, especially members of the family who think something is being withheld from them. But I'm very sure the chief of staff will be able to address that."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, June 30, 2007
12th Week in Ordinary Time
First Martyrs of the Church of Rome

1st Reading: Gen 18:1-15
Gospel: Matthew 8:5-17

When Jesus entered Capernaum, an army captain approached him to ask his help, "Sir, my servant lies sick at home. He is paralyzed and suffers terribly." Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

The captain answered, "I am not worthy to have you under my roof. Just give an order and my boy will be healed. For I myself, a junior officer, give orders to my soldiers. And if I say to one: 'Go,' he goes, and if I say to another: 'Come,' he comes, and to my servant: 'Do this,' he does it."

When Jesus heard this he was astonished and said to those who were following him, "I tell you, I have not found such faith in Israel. I say to you, many will come from east and west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob at the feast in the kingdom of heaven; but the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown out into the darkness; there they will wail and grind their teeth."

Then Jesus said to the captain, "Go home now. As you believed, so let it be." And at that moment his servant was healed.

Jesus went to Peter's house and found Peter's mother-in-law in bed with fever. He took her by the hand and the fever left her; she got up and began to wait on him. Towards evening they brought to Jesus many possessed by evil spirits, and with a word he drove out the spirits. He also healed all who were sick. In doing this he fulfilled what was said by the prophet Isaiah: He bore our infirmities and took on himself our diseases.

Commentary

The Lord appears to Abraham in the form of three strangers. They are welcomed and cared for and fed. Guests are to be treated as Yahweh's presence and Abraham recognizes that these men are somehow Yahweh's power and messengers. Sarah and the servants prepare the meal. The strangers ask where Sarah is, telling Abraham that they will return about the same time next year and Sarah will have borne a child. But Sarah is old and as she was listening at the tent flap. Upon hearing this, she makes fun of what they say, laughing at such a statement. She is caught and reprimanded for her lack of belief and in her fear, she lies about her disbelief. This is the woman who sought to have her own child, in her own way.

Sarah cannot believe she will bear a child in her old age. In the presence of Jesus everything becomes possible. A centurion asks Jesus to cure his servant and his faith is amazing. An outsider, a Roman, speaks about obedience, having been under discipline himself, recognizing Jesus' authority and his person as the power of healing and wholeness. Jesus is delighted and announces that this man is the image of who will be a believer in his community in the future. Jesus continues his healing of the sick as part of his mission. Jesus bore our infirmities and endured all our sufferings! How deep is our faith and do we practice it, or do we just laugh things off?

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'Errata Guide' corrects 269 textbook errors

From page A1

and delivered to 188 DepEd divisions, the cost of which was paid for by three textbook suppliers—LG & M Corp., Vibal Publishing House and Mary Jo Publishing House.

The three were the publishers of the textbooks found to contain all the errors, said Daisy Santos, head of the DepEd's Instructional Materials Council Secretariat (IMCS).

The IMCS is the agency that selects and prescribes textbooks and supplementary materials that are used in all public elementary and secondary schools.

The 11 textbooks reviewed by a panel of DepEd teachers and supervisors were found to have a total of 269 errors.

In one textbook alone, "Ang Bagong Pilipino 3," published in 2006 by the Mary Jo Publishing House, at least 77 errors were found.

"Makabayan: Katangiang Pilipino 2," published by LG & M, was found to have 48 errors.

Various errors were also found in four other LG & M publications: "Makabayan: Kasaysayang Pilipino 5" (43 errors), "Makabayan: KP5 teachers' manual" (3 errors), "Makabayan: Kapaligirang Pilipino 4" (32 errors) and "Makabayan: KP4 teachers' manual" (2 errors).

Five Vibal publications contained many errors: "Masipag na Pilipino 3" (31), "MP3 teachers' manual" (3), "Matapat na Pilipino 1" (18), "Marangal na Pilipino 5" (11) and "MP5 teachers' manual" (1).

'Stringent measures'

Depending on the gravity of the errors that may be found in their products, other textbook publishers may also be required to publish similar errata guides in the future, the DepEd said.

The issuance of the errata guide is one of several "stringent measures" that the DepEd has adopted to eliminate errors in textbook content, according to Education Secretary Jesli A. Lapus.

These reform measures would further enhance the department's capability to provide quality textbooks for all public schools nationwide, Lapus said.

The guide contains recommendations aimed at helping improve not just learning competencies but also teachers' skills, said Dr. Vilma Labrador, DepEd undersecretary for programs and projects.

Teachers are also asked to provide feedback by citing specific errors, explaining them and making recommendations on how they can be corrected.

A select group of teachers and school supervisors reviewed the 11 textbooks, along with other DepEd publications, to ensure that they were error-free, Labrador explained in the guide's foreword.

According to Santos, the DepEd issued a similar guide on textbook errors before, calling it "Teaching Notes."

Only one aspect of problem

But the militant Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) said the publishing of an errata guide deals with only one aspect of the problem of textbook content.

ACT chair Antonio Tinio said the DepEd has yet to address more fundamental concerns, like the way many history textbooks gloss over the Philippine-American War or exhibit a bias for the martial law regime of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

He warned the DepEd against becoming complacent as "the public debate on textbook content has hardly begun."

Despite the department's limited resources, Lapus is confident the DepEd can "make meaningful reforms happen in the field." This includes efforts at improving the content of government-issued textbooks, he said.

The IMCS said in a report that it has strengthened the content evaluation process for textbooks and teaching manuals.

It said the old two-stage evaluation system has been replaced by a four-level pre-bid evaluation system to address "the high percentage of textbooks and teachers' manuals being disapproved due to poor content quality."

Random inspection

The IMCS has also conducted a number of random inspection tours of publishing company warehouses to examine the production quality of textbooks.

"Major production errors, including books with inverted or missing pages and poor bindings were rejected outright by the recipient division offices. Minor typographical and spelling errors were also found as well as some minor production errors, which included books with untrimmed and wrinkled pages and smudges," the DepEd said.

Lapus has repeatedly asked the public to assist the department in the ongoing review of textbooks. It has also participated in Senate committee investigations into the reported errors in textbook content and alleged payoffs made to legislators by textbook publishers.

The DepEd is mandated by the Constitution to provide rent-free textbooks and other instructional materials to the public school system. It has been doing this since 1976.

In 2005 and 2006, the government spent some P3.42 billion on textbooks and instructional materials.

In the next two years, the DepEd will spend P4.23 billion for the procurement of 70,602,573 textbooks and other instructional materials, a priority program of the department.

Susceptible to graft

However, the four-stage DepEd textbook procurement system—bidding, pricing, purchasing and delivery—has always been susceptible to graft despite the department's strict guidelines.

Lapus said the DepEd was "constantly instituting measures to improve our procurement system to ensure the efficient and timely delivery of goods and services within the department."

He noted that "despite limited funds in 2006, the DepEd was able to fill the textbook requirements of the public school system due to the imposition of a new procurement policy which promotes transparency, fair competition and title uniformity."

Early this year, the DepEd's national textbook delivery program was cited as a "model for procurement reforms" by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), an international organization that coordinates aid from donor governments and multilateral organizations to developing countries.

Akbayan seeks early passage of pro-gay bill

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE PARTY-LIST GROUP AKBAYAN YESTERDAY urged the prioritization of the passage of the antidiscrimination bill in the 14th Congress for the equal rights of gays, lesbians, transgenders and bisexuals.

Akbayan was apparently emboldened by the progress of the civil case filed last year by a female impersonator against a commercial establishment which barred him from entering its premises.

The damage suit filed by Inday Garutay (Christopher Borja in real life) on July 17, 2006 will reportedly proceed and undergo trial after a Pasig regional trial court junked a petition to dismiss the P600,000 suit filed against the owners of Aruba Restaurant at the Metrowalk Commercial Complex in Pasig City.

Garutay lodged the complaint against the Aruba management after the establishment asked him to leave for cross-dressing. A manager of the restaurant claimed they had a dress code and it was their policy that cross-dressers are to be barred from entering the establishment.

Akbayan party-list representative Risa Hontiveros said the progress of Garutay's case has further fueled their group's pursuit of the passage of the Anti-Discrimination Bill, which was originally filed by Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales during the 11th Congress.

"We are truly in awe of Inday and other members of the LGBT (lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders) because for the first time, somebody fought a case like this in the legal arena and for Akbayan, this is a signal for us to further pursue our long sought-after plea for the passage of an antidiscrimination bill in congress," Hontiveros said at a press conference yesterday.

Hontiveros disclosed that Akbayan plans to refile the proposed legislation on Monday for the 14th Congress and is banking on Senator –elect Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino to act as their counterpart in the Senate.

The party-list group also wants to prevent Manila Rep, Bienvenido Abante, who chaired the House Committee on Civil, Political, and Human Rights, from assuming the same post in the 14th Congress.

"We will oppose Abante's chairmanship of the committee on human rights because of his blatant and shameful opposition to the antidiscrimination bill.

The antidiscrimination bill proposes to penalize practices that unjustly discriminate against lesbians and gays in public service, employment, and other entitlements as citizens of the country.

Abante, it was learned, expressed firm opposition to the bill on the ground that the proposed legislation would usher in discussions on the possible recognition of same sex marriages by law.

Jonas Bagas of the Akbayan Gay and Lesbian Collective said the wrong information on the inclusion of same sex marriage in the provisions of the proposed legislation killed the bill in the previous congress.

"It is actually part of a disinformation campaign. There is no provision on the antidiscrimination bill about that," Bagas said, adding, "Though we do not oppose same sex marriages, the LGBT believes that there should be a serious debate on this matter. There should be a discussion on same sex marriages where the society will eventually accept that such marriages are valid and legitimate."

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GMA eyes amnesty for all rebs

From page A1

this is a major policy (of) the President."

He said a general amnesty was "a major part of the peace process ... because after all what is the peace process but silencing the guns and having reconciliation among protagonists?"

Earlier in the day, Ermita laid bare before reporters what could be the extent and coverage of the planned amnesty.

"I recall there were about six amnesty proclamations (in the past) and this covered, one, those rebels who have returned to the folds and one of the conditions is for them to be given amnesty," Ermita said.

"Then, suddenly it also covered those returnees from the secessionists, then it also covered amnesty for soldiers like RAM (Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa) of (Sen. Gregorio) Honasan, and also covered ... those soldiers who have been charged in line with the implementation of their duties," he said. *("In the Know" Page A10)*

The Ramos government, following the peace agreement it signed in 1995 with RAM, granted unconditional amnesty to 3,731 military officers and soldiers involved in the 1987 and 1989 coup attempts.

Ermita pointed out that since the time of President Fidel Ramos, no amnesty proclamation has been sent to Congress.

Renewing the talks

"Now, as part of the peace process, we feel that it will be very helpful that those fighting government will be looking forward to that (amnesty), especially if they know the government will give them a second (chance) .... so they become good citizens."

Ermita cited the peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the renewed efforts to convince the National Democratic Front to go back to the negotiating table.

Talks with the NDF broke down in 2004 after the United States, the European Union (EU) and other states included the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army, on the list of terrorist organizations.

Major policy

"But right now we are still in the process of finishing our negotiations with the MILF, we are still in the process of putting back on track our negotiations with the NDF," he said.

Secret trip to Norway

The other day, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales confirmed that he and Presidential Peace Adviser Jesus Dureza had secretly gone to Norway for a possible resumption of negotiations with the NDF.

Gonzales said that during that trip a couple of weeks ago, he and Dureza wanted to "touch base and see the possibilities" for the resumption of stalled talks with the umbrella group of leftist underground organizations.

"We've always been open to the possibility of resuming peace talks if important conditions are met, particularly a ceasefire (which) is essential to the peace talks," Gonzales said.

Need to review policy

Ermita cited the need to review the antiinsurgency policy of the administration in light of the political killings being "unfairly" blamed by leftist groups and the international community on some segments of the military.

"We have the national internal security plan. It is a holistic approach to our counterinsurgency campaign, especially the communist insurgency that is heavy on propaganda," he said.

"As they go on propaganda, government suffers from propaganda brought about by the charges they level against security forces," Ermita said.

"As mentioned by the EU ambassador, all these reports on unexplained killings indeed are tarnishing the image of the Philippine government abroad." *(Story on Page A1.)*

Curb human rights abuses

Therefore, he said, the Arroyo administration has to "emphasize to our forces engaged in counterinsurgency to ensure that human rights violations are avoided, to ensure that there will be no other information that can be a source for charges against the military and the police just in the name of counterinsurgency."

He agreed on the "need to develop some more awareness" of human rights on the part of the state forces.

Ermita said they should "be aware that there's a need for us to look into the human rights aspect of our counterinsurgency."

IN THE KNOW

Amnesty proclamations

FORMER PRESIDENT CORAZON Aquino's Proclamation No. 80, issued on Feb. 28, 1987, granted full amnesty to persons who committed crimes "in furtherance of their political beliefs."

It also created an Amnesty Committee in each province and city to determine who are covered.

Her successor, Fidel V. Ramos, signed two amnesty proclamations (347 and 348) on March 25, 1994.

The first one gave amnesty to rebels, insurgents, and other persons who committed crimes to further political ends. However, it did not extinguish their civil liabilities for damages caused to private persons.

Proclamation No. 347 also created the National Amnesty Commission, which was tasked with processing applications for amnesty and determining whether or not applicants were entitled to it.

On the other hand, Proclamation No. 348 was for personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police who committed acts or omissions connected to counterinsurgency operations which are punishable under the Revised Penal Code or the Articles of War.

Ineligible for amnesty under this were those who committed torture, arson, massacre, rape and robbery.

Ramos again issued an amnesty proclamation on May 17, 1996. Proclamation No. 723 granted amnesty to members and supporters of the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa-Soldiers of the Filipino People-Young Officers' Union (RAM-SFP-YOU) who committed crimes in pursuit of political beliefs between Feb. 22, 1986 and Dec. 23, 1992.

Amnesty for members and supporters of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front was granted under former President Joseph Estrada's Proclamation No. 390, issued on Sept. 29, 2000.

But those who committed the following crimes were not covered in that amnesty grant: kidnap for ransom, massacre, torture of civilians and rape.

Estrada extended amnesty for rebels other than MILF members on Oct. 26, 2000 through Proclamation No. 405. The proclamation did not cover those who committed the crimes specified in his earlier amnesty proclamation.

A common provision in amnesty proclamations requires the persons involved to apply for amnesty within a specified period. *Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

Trillanes comes out with all guns blazing

From page A1

the May 14 mid-term elections.

"All of them (Team Unity candidates) benefited from that fraud," Trillanes said, when asked why he was singling out Zubiri.

The new senator was sworn in before a packed crowd at the court at BF Homes decked out with red ribbons and streamers.

Trillanes wore a dark blue barong and did not let go of the hands of his 8-year old daughter, Thea, during his swearing-in ceremony.

Asked what evidence he had to substantiate his accusations, Trillanes said: "Aside from Maguidanao, we have found out cheating in several provinces and municipalities nationwide."

He said that he and Sen. Panfilo Lacson had "testimonial and documentary" evidence of electoral fraud.

He also said that he knew and had spoken to the three generals mentioned in recent INQUIRER stories who claimed to have knowledge of election cheating.

Trillanes reiterated he would actively participate in the reopening of the "Hello, Garci" tapes inquiry and would summon his former boss, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, to a Senate inquiry on alleged cheating during the 2004 presidential election.

Asked what he would do if Esperon invoked Executive Order No. 464 barring government officials from testifying in congressional hearings without presidential consent, Trillanes replied: "He can invoke that until he retires in February 2008. He better line up and apply for a new position if he wants to invoke that."

Hitting GMA

The so-called "Hello, Garci" tapes are supposed wiretapped conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano on rigging the 2004 vote, an allegation both Ms Arroyo and Garcillano have denied.

He said Filipinos had suffered for tolerating the alleged illegitimacy of Ms Arroyo's presidency.

"We tolerated GMA regardless of her cheating, which all of us know (about) and have confirmed. We heard it in the 'Hello, Garci' recordings. What (has it brought) to us? Only chaos and division," he added.

Yearning for closure

He also said that "if the country really wants to move forward, we have to get rid of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo."

He said he was willing to talk to each congressman to advance his cause.

"We will be relentless, we will make sure that there will be closure in any investigation, unlike in the past. We cannot have another cheat in the Senate, we have to make a stand," he said.

Trillanes said he would also join the investigation into political killings in the country.

Trillanes reportedly got sick in the vehicle carrying him to Caloocan from his detention quarters.

Biazon is Senate mentor

"He felt dizzy and threw up," according to Jack V. Sales, his brother-in-law.

Trillanes was accompanied by his military escorts.

In a short speech, Trillanes talked of his family as "my strength ever since I went to Oakwood and until now." He acknowledged Sen. Rodolfo Biazon as his mentor in the Senate.

Biazon, former Caloocan Mayor Rey Malonzo, former Caloocan Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio, former Congressman Edgar Erice and Princess Nemenzo of Laban ng Masa were among those who attended the oathtaking.

Trillanes said his lawyers had filed a motion to allow him to attend all Senate activities. He is detained at the Philippine Marines headquarters in Fort Bonifacio.

He was allowed by Makati Judge Oscar Pimentel to attend his oathtaking after government prosecutors posed no objection. *With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

After 44 days, Padaca proclaimed; Leviste new Batangas vice gov

From page A1

Padaca received 237,128 votes against Dy's 220,121 votes, or a lead of 17,007.

Reelectionist Vice Gov. Ramon Reyes was proclaimed a day earlier as winner of the vice gubernatorial race against former Ilagan Mayor Mercedes Uy.

Padaca, in a phone interview yesterday, said her proclamation "finally put to rest all the anxiety, apprehensions and sacrifices" that she and her supporters were made to go through.

Blames Comelec

She skipped the official proclamation by the PBOC as a sign of protest and instead chose to be proclaimed by her lawyers, Francisco Marallag and Glenn Abellon, and Provincial Prosecutor Franklin Pagurayan

"To me, it just did not feel right," she said.

Padaca partly blamed the Comelec for making her "suffer the agony of waiting."

She earlier accused the Comelec and Malacañang of trying to manipulate the results of the elections and install Dy as governor.

"But I still appreciate all the correct things done by the Comelec ... I just have to express my frustration over all the exasperating things that we in Isabela have been subjected to. It has always been like this," she said.

Beating another Dy

In 2004, Padaca won against reelectionist Gov. Faustino Dy Jr., Benjamin Dy's brother, but her proclamation was also delayed due to protests filed by the Dy camp.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach lawyer Abraham Johnny Asuncion, PBOC chair and acting Isabela election supervisor. He did not take calls on his mobile phone.

FINALLY, IT'S OFFICIAL. Mark Leviste is the new Batangas vice governor as of Friday. PDI PHOTO

Lawyer Catherine Sardillo, Dy's lead counsel, said she would file before the Comelec on Monday a motion to annul the proclamation of Padaca, saying the proceedings were illegally done.

Sardillo said their camp was not informed of the PBOC ruling that junked their motions to suspend proceedings and to exclude alleged spurious certificates of canvass (CoCs) from Ilagan town.

"We were not informed [of the board's decision] despite our pleas for a written ruling on the matter," she said. "There should have been no proclamation unless these appeals were resolved."

Dy will sue

Dy said the CoCs used for Ilagan were "improvised" and were made inside the local election office without poll watchers from the Dy camp.

"We do not know what pushed the special canvassers' board [to act like this]... the proclamation was railroaded," he said.

He vowed to sue village chiefs and teachers who allegedly connived in carrying out supposed fraud in the first district of the province.

Padaca disputed Dy's claim that the CoCs from Ilagan were manufactured.

Marallag said the motions filed by Dy's lawyer were improper and aimed at derailing the proclamation so he did not receive them.

Ermita petition thrown out

"After a careful evaluation of the records of this case, the Commission en banc finds that there are no sufficient and convincing evidence presented to warrant the declaration of failure of elections," Comelec ruled on the younger Ermita's petition.

The body noted that a petition for failure of elections may only be declared if it could be proven that voting did not take place because of violence, terrorism or fraud.

A failure may also be declared if elections did take place but nobody emerged as winner.

"We take notice of the fact that the winning candidates for the municipal offices in Sto. Tomas and Taysan have already been proclaimed," the commissioners added, citing the certificates of canvass and proclamation of certificates of winning candidates.

Not enough votes

They also said that votes involved in the petition were not sufficient to affect the results of the elections.

Comelec suspended the proclamation of the winner for the vice governor position last May 18 following Ermita's petition for the declaration of election failure.

Ermita cited as grounds the burning of a school in Pinagbayanan, Taysan, that resulted in the death of a teacher and his poll watcher, massive vote-buying, bribery, employment of armed groups, and use of government funds and resources by the rival camp.

Others who joined Ermita's petition were candidates Hernando Villena, who ran for Taysan mayoral post, Meynard Sabili, for the 4th congressional district, Noel Ascano, for Sto. Tomas mayor, and seven others.

SWS: Scale of corruption in gov't remains high ...

From page A1

Metro Davao, Cagayan de Oro-Iligan and Cavite-Laguna-Batangas.

The respondents were picked at random from lists furnished by cooperating business associations.

Good news

While results showed that the scale of corruption in the public sector remains high, bribery in exchange for a government contract has dropped in Metro Manila.

Of the 46 percent who said that "almost all" of their contemporaries gave bribe money to win public sector contracts last year, only 42 percent said so this year.

"This is a development worth looking at coming a long way from 57 percent four years ago. This is good news," said SWS president Mahar Mangahas.

Overall, still more managers admitted that bribery was rampant in their sector, accounting for 48 percent, 2 percent higher than last year's.

Forty percent said that someone from government solicited money from them in exchange for granting a local government permit or license last year; 37 percent were asked for money to get national government permits and 25 percent in complying with import regulations.

The survey also revealed that only a minority of companies follow basic, ethical business practices.

Fifty percent said that companies in their line of business always demanded receipts; 35 percent said they regularly issued receipts; and only 24 percent said they kept only one set of books and 18 percent said they paid taxes honestly.

While the notion that corruption is part of the way the government works drew more or less equal positive and negative responses, 52 percent of business executives based in Metro Manila did not believe that the government can be run without corruption.

PCGG 'worse'

Of the 29 government agencies rated on their sincerity in fighting corruption, 11 got a higher positive rating, 16 were "not as bad" and only PCGG "got worse," the study said.

Out of the five agencies with "poor sincerity," only the PCGG's rating slipped further in the negative.

The other agencies that rated poorly were the transportation and communications, interior and local governments, justice and the environment and natural resources departments.

Of those surveyed, 24 percent believed in the PCGG's sincerity, 32 percent were undecided while 43 percent said it was insincere, giving it a net sincerity rating of minus-19. In 2005, the PCGG's net rating was plus-5 but this slipped to minus-13 the following year.

DPWH/Customs

The Department of Public Works and Highways and the Bureau of Customs, deemed to have "very bad sincerity," improved their ratings from minus-66 to minus-55 and minus-74 to minus-68, respectively.

Those agencies with "good sincerity" were identified as Filipino business associations, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Social Security System, the Supreme Court and the Department of Health.

The Sandiganbayan, the Commission on Audit, the Government Service Insurance System and city governments received a "moderate sincerity" rating.

Other survey findings were:

- Two out of five managers spent an average of P292,000 to fight fraud in their own firms and one out of five donated an average of P136,000 to an anti-corruption fund last year.
- One out of two are willing to spend and donate for the same purposes in the next two years.
- Sixty-one percent see "good or excellent" business weather over the next two years, up from 46 percent in 2006 and 2005. Half of the respondents said they were satisfied with the national government and two-thirds with the local governments in the way they promoted a good business climate.
- Filipino managers were enthusiastic about the idea of establishing a transparency information bureau that will issue transparency ratings on the reputation of individuals, companies and agencies regarding honesty and ethics in business.

Sincerity of Government Agencies in Fighting Corruption

	Gross Sincere	Gross Insincere	Net
VERY GOOD			
Filipino Business Assoc	72	7	+66
DTI	68	14	+54
SSS	65	13	+52
GOOD			
Supreme Court	62	17	+45
DOH	54	23	+32
MODERATE			
City/municipal govt	51	24	+26
COA	44	24	+20
Sandiganbayan	38	24	+14
GSIS	39	26	+13
MEDIOCRE			
DepEd	43	32	+10
Trial Courts	39	29	+10
Ombudsman	38	29	+9
DBM	37	33	+5
Office of the President	40	43	-3
Senate	32	39	-7
PAGC	29	37	-8
DA	30	38	-8
AFP	30	39	-9
POOR			
DOTC	28	41	-13
DILG	26	44	-18
DOJ	27	47	-19
PCGG	24	43	-19
DENR	25	48	-23
PNP	24	47	-23
BAD			
LTO	23	54	-31
House of Representatives	20	52	-32
Comelec	20	56	-36
BIR	17	65	-49
VERY BAD			
DPWH	12	67	-55
Bureau of Customs	9	76	-68

Net = gross sincere - gross insincere
Very good = over +50
Good = +31 to +50
Mediocre = -10 to +10
Poor = -11 to -30
Bad = -31 to -50
Very bad = below -50

Source: Social Weather Stations

Naia braces for lifting of ban on liquids

By Tarra Quismundo

AIR TRANSPORTATION officers from Australia are set to train their Filipino counterparts on how to screen liquids, aerosols and gels (LAGs) as Philippine airports brace for the lifting of the total ban on these substances in carry-on bags.

In preparation for the ban's relaxation on Aug. 1, Australian aviation officers will hold a workshop for local airport security personnel next week to "share the Australian experience" in screening regulated amounts of LAGs, officials said yesterday.

Aviation officials recently agreed to lift the total ban on LAGs by Aug. 1 and allow passengers to hand-carry these substances in 100ml containers. Currently, all LAGs of any amount are strictly required to be placed in check-in luggage.

The revised policy, compliant with standards of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), entailed the enforcement of new screening procedures, including the requirement that all LAGs be placed in standard size transparent resealable plastic bags for inspection.

In implementing the downgrade, Philippine authorities saw it fit to learn from a country that had a head start. Australia has been implementing the revised ICAO policy since March 31 of this year.

"This workshop will prepare further airport security personnel to ensure the smooth implementation of the new screening procedure," said Dan Tardecilla, head executive assistant of the Office of Transportation Security (OTS), among the agencies tasked to enforce the downgrade.

The foreign aviation security officers will lead the one-day training on July 4 through Australia's Department of Transport and Regional Services and the Australian Embassy.

Chief Supt. Atilano Morada, chief of the Philippine National Police Aviation Security Group, said the workshop was a chance for local airport personnel to know what should and should not be done when they start enforcing the revised LAGs policy.

"We can learn from their experience, how they come up to implementing procedures in [screening] liquids, aerosols and gels, and what problems they encountered, so from there, we will learn, anticipate what could happen, and we can immediately come up with resolutions," Morada said.

"It's good that we listen to the experience of other states so that based on that, we know what we could add or change in the procedure," he added.

Pi Sigma anniversary

PI SIGMA FRATERNITY celebrates 35 years of brotherhood to officially kick off its 35th anniversary this year, the Pi Sigma Fraternity has organized the "Gathering of Sigmans" to be held on Saturday, June 30, 2007, at 6 p.m. at the Access Point RestoBar at 38 Scout Borromeo, South Triangle, Quezon City (near the ABS CBN compound).

All alumni and resident brods are invited to come to the event and share the night of meaningful fun and merriment.

Among the highlights of the fraternity's year-long celebration is the holding of the Grand Fraternity Ball scheduled on Aug. 11, 2007 at the Manila Intercontinental Hotel in Makati City.

Founded on Aug. 15, 1972 in UP Diliman by eight activist-students, the Pi Sigma Fraternity has grown to become one of the largest and most influential Greek-lettered fraternities in the country with chapters in major schools and universities across the archipelago.

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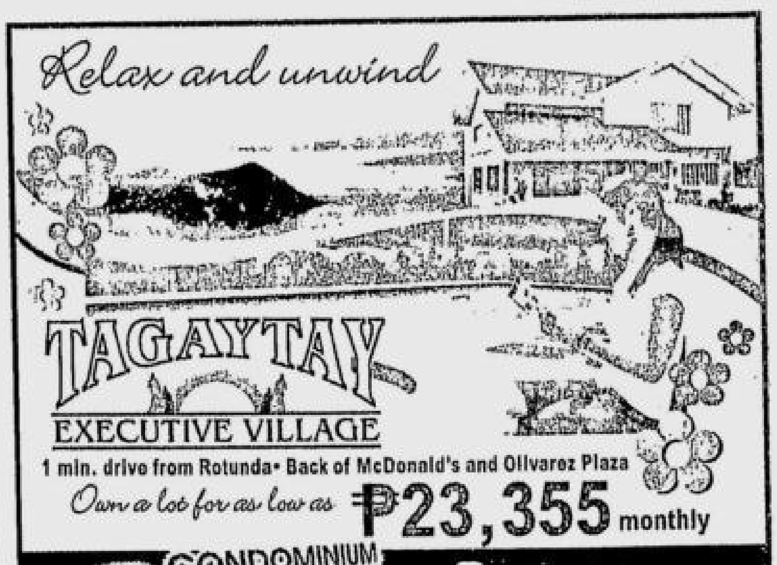
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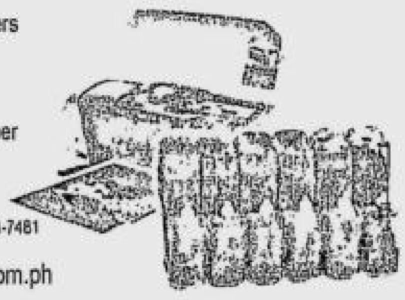
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I. The Department of National Defense, through DND-Proper Bids and Awards Committee, invites suppliers/ manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following projects:

Bidding of Various Supplies and Materials:

Name of Project	Description	Approved Budget for Contract (ABC)
1. Office Supplies	Supply and Delivery of Assorted Office Supplies	967,618.75
2. Computer Supplies	Supply and Delivery of Assorted Computer Supplies	322,452.00
3. Other Supplies	Supply and Delivery of Assorted Other Supplies	3,719,625.00
TOTAL		PhP5,009,695.75

II. The schedule of activities are as follows:

ACTIVITIES	VENUE	DATE	TIME
Issuance of Bid Documents	Rm 203, 2ND Floor, OASIL, DND Bldg.	July 09 - 30, 2007	9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M
Pre-Bid Conference	OASPER Old Conference Room, Basement, DND Bldg.	July 19, 2007	9:30 A.M.
Deadline for Submission/ Opening of Bids	OASPER Old Conference Room, Basement, DND Bldg.	July 31, 2007	9:30 A.M.
Bid Evaluation	These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)-A of R.A. 9184 dated 10 January 2003.		
Post-Qualification			
Issuance of Notice of Award			

III. Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of non-refundable amount as indicated below to the DND-Proper BAC Secretariat, Room 203, 2ND Floor, OASIL, DND Building, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City, Tel No. 911-6423:

Name of Project	Cost of Bidding Documents
1. Office Supplies	PhP 1,000.00
2. Computer Supplies	500.00
3. Other Supplies	3,700.00

IV. The eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/ fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted. All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part-A (IRR-A).

V. All prospective bidders are encouraged to apply for a certificate of eligibility not later than two (2) days prior to the scheduled submission and opening of bids.

VI. The OSND assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

VII. The OSND reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality and award the Contract to the bidder whose proposal is the most advantageous to the government as evaluated by the DND-Proper Bids and Awards Committee (DND-Proper BAC).

VIII. The Invitation is also posted in the DND website at **www.dnd.gov.ph**, in accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184. Further, it shall also be posted at conspicuous places in the premises of the Department of National Defense (DND).

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(PDI – June 30, 2007)

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Priests suspect 'vicious drama' in Bossi ...

From page A1

groups, and all possible witnesses, even the most secret hideouts, using the latest high-tech devices," the priests said in the statement.

They added:

"We were told that emissaries were sent with cell phones to verify if he is alive, we were told that medicines had been provided for his hypertension, we were told he is well (and) alive riding a horse. We were told that the kidnappers are asking for P15 million. But when we tried to verify all these reports we have come to the conclusion that they are all false reports."

Bossi was abducted on June 10 while on his way to celebrate Mass in Payao, Zamboanga Sibugay.

PIME's Philippine superior, Fr. Gianni Battista Sandalo, said the "baseless reports" had caused them so much despair and agony.

"But if you'll ask us if we received information, nothing. No one is coming out to inform us, it's totally zero," Sandalo said in an interview with the INQUIRER.

FR. BOSSI: "He cannot disappear like a ghost. He's too big and must be difficult to hide him," his dismayed colleagues from his congregation say in a statement.

Sandalo said that three weeks after the incident, "we are still in the dark."

PIME, which includes 20 missionaries nationwide, criticized in its statement the lack of reliable information about the Bossi kidnapping.

They also lamented the lack of "clear identification of the kidnappers."

"No confirmed sighting, no demand for ransom, no declaration of purpose for this sudden abduction. We know that Giancarlo cannot disappear like a ghost. He is too big and must be difficult to hide him," the PIME priests said.

No one to trust anymore

Sandalo said it was difficult for them to just keep their silence and wait for nothing.

Claretian priest Angel Calvo, president of the Peace Advocates Zamboanga (PAZ), said Bossi's family in Abbiategrasso in Milan and the PIME community "deserve to be informed of what is going on."

Sandalo said the priests did not know who to trust anymore as far as information was concerned.

"We know for a fact that his captors (belong to) a large armed group and who certainly have cell phones and connections with various influential personalities and organizations. Why can't they be identified? Why can't they declare their purpose?" PIME said.

Kidnap was a staged drama?

The PIME missionaries felt the Bossi kidnapping might have been staged.

"By now, we feel this is a vicious drama, the false reports are part of the drama, and those who make these stories know that they are only deceiving the public. Why? Is this an attempt to cover up for some other purpose?" PIME asked.

"We are convinced that several people and organizations know the truth. Why do they reply like Cain, 'I don't know! Am I my brother's keeper?' Or are they the ones responsible for what happened to Giancarlo, as Cain was responsible to what happened to Abel?" PIME added.

Calvo said the prolonged captivity of Bossi indicated that "authorities are not really in full control of the situation and cannot even solve problems like Bossi's case."

Plea for understanding

"At this point, the feeling of insecurity and helplessness is becoming great," he said.

He said the incident also indicated that the "whole society is held hostage by a bunch of armed men."

Col. Jovencio Magalso, chief of the Task Force Bossi, appealed for more understanding.

"It is understandable (for them) to express their feelings and their impatience, but we assure them we are all doing everything (and we are even) going the extra mile to locate Bossi," Magalso said.

'Positive developments'

"We are doing our best effort, we don't rest, we hardly sleep and we move around 24 hours," he said.

At least a battalion of soldiers, backed by the military's Naval and Air Force assets, is involved in the operation. This is aside from the efforts of the Philippine National Police and the MILF.

In Camp Aguinaldo, the military said there were "positive developments" in its efforts to secure Bossi's release but gave no details out of concern, it said, for the priest's safety.

Armed Forces information chief Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro said this was conveyed to him by AFP Western Mindanao Command chief Lt. Gen. Eugenio Cedo.

"(Cedo) stated that right now there are positive developments. As to what these developments are, he wouldn't at this moment disclose to the media," Bacarro told reporters.

Dolorfino now mum

He said Cedo would not even say if the so-called positive developments were happening in Zamboanga Sibugay or in the Lanao area—the two places where the military has deployed troops.

Bacarro said the AFP would "take advantage of these developments to ... reach our end state, which is rescuing Father Bossi."

AFP's Metro Manila commander, Maj. Gen. Ben Dolorfino, who heads a government panel coordinating with the MILF in going after criminal groups in Mindanao, said he would no longer issue statements to the media on the Bossi case.

Dolorfino said it would be Bacarro who would now do the talking about Bossi and did not explain why he was distancing himself from the media.

Conflicting statements

Dolorfino's move to now keep quiet on the Bossi case came after he and Cedo gave conflicting statements early this week on the whereabouts of the Italian priest.

Cedo said Bossi and his kidnappers remained in Zamboanga Sibugay while Dolorfino said the priest was being held in Lanao, where the MILF was reportedly concentrating its operations in helping get Bossi back.

The last time Dolorfino spoke about Bossi was three days ago when he said that three emissaries, who claimed to have contact with the kidnappers, had left for Lanao to ask them to show "proof of life."

The emissaries were given a cell phone by the military which they would use in contacting a designated person who could confirm, once contact with Bossi was established, that it was indeed the priest talking at the other end of the line. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

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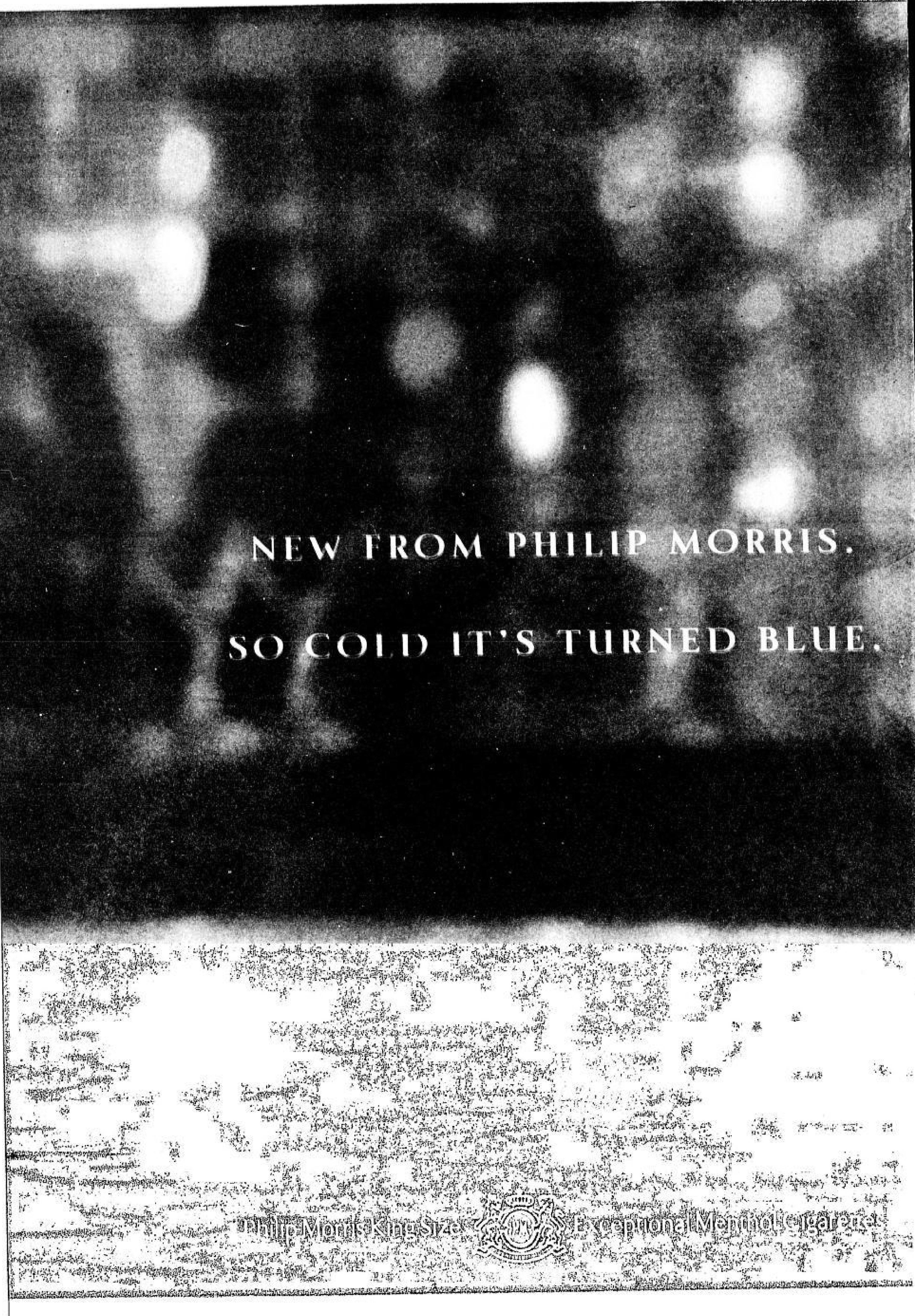

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Cats domesticated themselves, says study

UNLIKE OTHER DOMESTIC ANIMALS THAT were tamed by people, cats probably domesticated themselves, which could account for the haughty independence of their descendants.

"The cats were adapting themselves to a new environment, so the push for domestication came from the cat side, not the human side," said Carlos A. Driscoll of the National Cancer Institute.

Some 10,000 years ago, somewhere in the Near East, an audacious wildcat crept into one of the crude villages of early human settlers—the first to domesticate wheat and barley.

There she felt safe from her many predators in the region, such as hyenas and larger cats. The rodents that infested the settlers' homes and granaries were sufficient prey.

Seeing that she was earning her keep, the settlers tolerated her, and their children greeted her kittens with delight.

At least five females of the wildcat subspecies known as Felis silvestris lybica accomplished this delicate transition from forest to village. And from these five matriarchs are descended all the world's 600 million house cats.

A scientific basis for this scenario has been established by Driscoll and his colleagues.

Driscoll spent more than six years collecting species of wildcat from Scotland to Mongolia. He then analyzed the DNA of the wildcats and of many house cats and fancy cats.

Five subspecies of wildcat are distributed across the Old World. They are known as the European wildcat, the Near Eastern wildcat, the Southern African wildcat, the Central Asian wildcat and the Chinese desert cat. Their patterns of DNA fall into five clusters.

The DNA of all house cats and fancy cats falls within the Near Eastern wildcat cluster, making clear that this subspecies is their ancestor, Driscoll and his colleagues said in a report published Thursday on the website of the journal Science.

The house cats in the study fell into five lineages, based on analysis of their mitochondrial DNA, a type that is passed down through the female line.

Since the oldest archaeological site with a cat burial is about 9,500 years old, the geneticists suggest that the founders of the five lineages lived around this time and were the first cats to be domesticated.

Until recently, the cat was commonly believed to have been domesticated in ancient Egypt, where it was a cult animal. *New York Times News Service*

A CAT winks while sitting in its cage at the animal shelter in Hanau, near Frankfurt on Wednesday. Animal shelters across Germany are overcrowded and animal care activists expect even more animals during the upcoming summer vacation season, when some owners get rid of their pets.
REUTERS

THIS UNDATED photo provided by the journal Science shows the wildcat, Felis silvestris lybica, which was trapped in Israel as part of the author's research into the origin of cat domestication. Cats similar to this one were the likely ancestor of the domestic cat.

Jamby ...

From page A1

record in the Senate, and claimed that the number of her absences at sessions was bloated in a manner not unlike the alleged vote-padding and -shaving in last month's midterm elections.

"A close scrutiny of the official Senate records and Senate journal [will] prove that I was on sick leave for three session days and on official leave for one day," Madrigal yesterday said in a statement.

Earlier, a leaked copy of the Senate attendance record showed that Madrigal had missed out on 37 of the 68 sessions in the 13th Congress, scoring a tie with Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. The same paper showed that she was late in coming to the sessions 27 times.

But Madrigal said some unscrupulous person had done a hatchet job on her by adding the figure 7 beside her 3 absences in the journal, to make it appear that she was absent 37 times.

"I take my duties as a senator seriously. I believe in the integrity of the Senate as an institution, and that is why I issue this statement to denounce this false allegation and black propaganda. It is sad that official Senate records are now being manipulated for personal and political ends," she said.

Better things to do

Madrigal also took a swipe at certain "self-righteous" parties, but did not name names.

"To those under the self-righteous delusion that perfect attendance equates to good performance and personal integrity, let them be reminded that there are better things to do during Senate sessions than attend a basketball game, iron out backroom deals, and ask another colleague to preside," she said.

The record showed that Senators Juan Flavier and Jinggoy Estrada had perfect attendance.

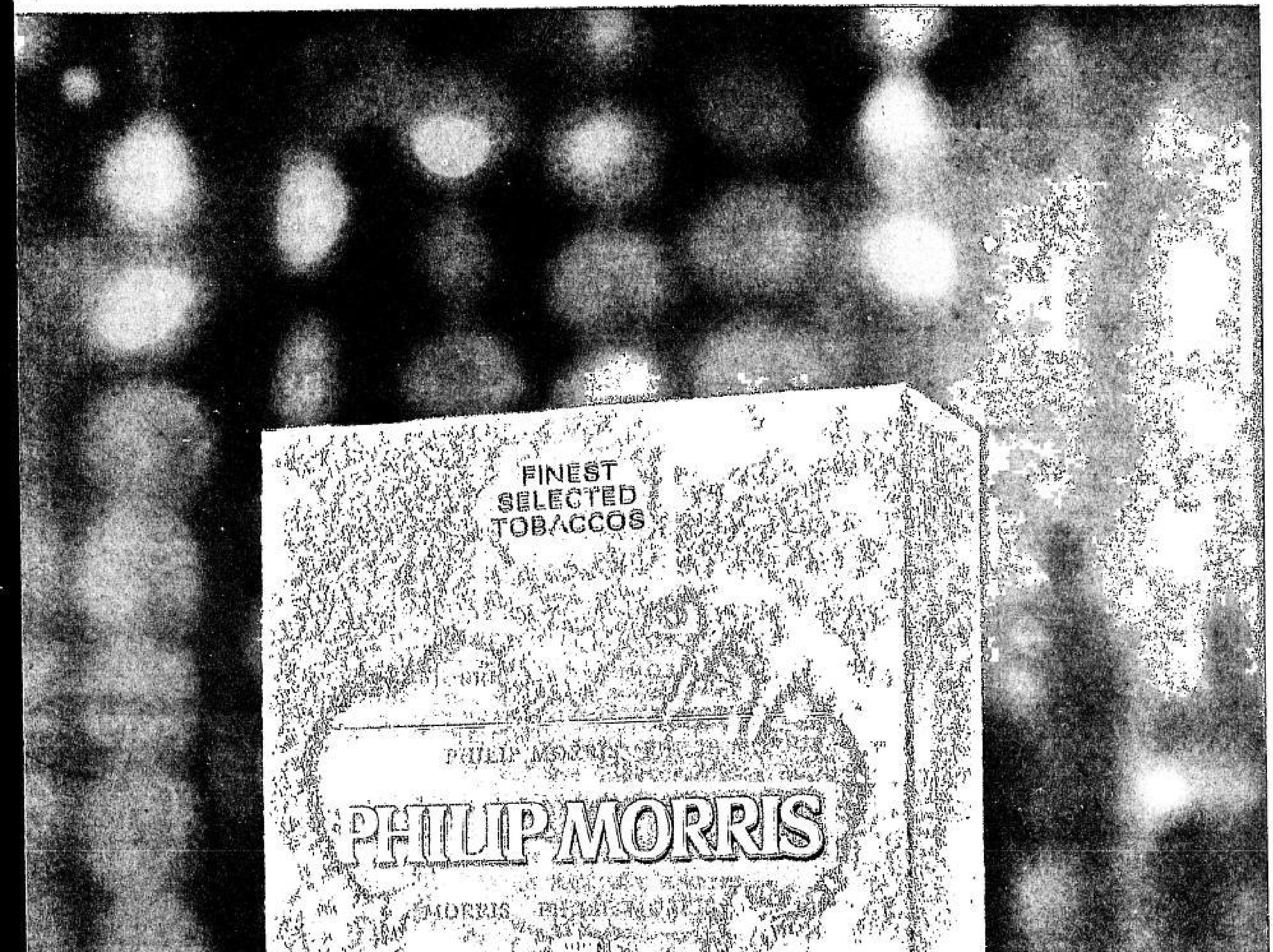
Senate presidency

Madrigal attributed the "malicious" accusations to the current jockeying for the Senate presidency.

"It is unfortunate that as the race for the Senate presidency heats up, more baseless accusations and allegations may be hurled against those of us who chose to unite and stay with the Genuine Opposition out of principle and not cross over to the administration bloc merely for political and personal gains," she said.

Madrigal—who, according to Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, is among the senators likely to seek the presidency in 2010—is backing Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. for Senate president in the 14th Congress.

The incumbent, Sen. Manuel Villar, has reportedly obtained the endorsement of administration, opposition and independent senators to ensure his hold on the post.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Extortion

NEGROS ORIENTAL REP. HERMINIO TEVES, NOW 87, apparently planned to end his political career with a bang. Instead, he seems to be finishing it with a whimper by following Malacañang's "request" to keep his mouth shut.

EDITORIAL

With just over a week to go before his third term expired, Teves rocked the House of Representatives with the revelation that some members of the House panel in the Commission on Appointments had demanded P5 million in exchange for the confirmation of his son, Margarito, as secretary of finance. Teves said the demand was conveyed to him during a meeting in a restaurant, but he told his colleagues his son would never agree to pay them off. Instead of dropping their demand, Teves said, someone suggested that he cough up the amount himself, prompting him to ask if they were not ashamed of themselves to be demanding money from a colleague. "They never came back to me," he said. Pressed to identify the congressmen involved, Teves said one of them ran for senator and lost, while the others were "third-termers whose wives ran but lost."

A few days later, former Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban revealed a similar experience. He said eight members of the CA had demanded P80 million worth of projects from him. Because he refused, his confirmation was bypassed.

The exposé was immediately met with angry denials by the lawmakers who felt alluded to. Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay, who ran for the Senate and lost, said Teves was merely "sour-graping." He said they blocked the finance secretary's confirmation because he was "a weakling" and " indecisive." "He does not know how to address the concerns of politicians," Pichay said. Iloilo Rep. Rolex Suplico said all he asked was that the Land-Bank branch manager in his province be sacked for approving an anomalous transaction. He then challenged Teves to name names and "finish what he started."

House leaders said they would ask the ethics committee to conduct an investigation, but at the same time wondered how they would proceed since those who had been implicated by Teves would no longer be members of the House by the time the committee is organized.

The most curious reactions, however, came from Malacañang. First, it announced that it would keep its hands off the controversy. Congress would be in the "best position" to look into the issue since it involves its members, according to Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye. Next it tried to gag Teves, who revealed that he had been asked by "people from Malacañang" to stop talking "because the accusations were getting worse." Then it sought to justify the exactions of lawmakers, saying these were "normal" activities required by their jobs.

"Provided it is not a condition for confirmation," Bunye said, "I believe all the members of the commission, being representatives of their respective districts, would take the initiative of trying to get projects." How asking for projects can be seen as anything but a condition for confirmation when they are mentioned in the same breath, Bunye did not bother to explain.

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol went even further than Bunye, saying that it is not only "natural" for lawmakers to ask for projects from Cabinet members but it is their "obligation" to do so. Lobbying for projects is "part of the job of the congressman," said Apostol, and Cabinet members who cannot grant the requests of congressmen "have no business being in their posts."

If Apostol is right, that should put the entire issue to rest. But, maybe, he can tell everyone exactly where in the Constitution it is stated that bringing projects to their districts is the function—nay, the "obligation"—of congressmen? Is this perhaps part of their oath?

It is commonly understood that public servants are there to serve the people. However, Apostol is now saying there is a class of public servants who are appointed to serve the congressmen, and they have the lofty title of "secretary."

Now we know why Malacañang would try to hush up the very serious charges made by Teves and Panganiban. It sees nothing wrong with lawmakers demanding payoffs, in cash or in kind, from presidential appointees seeking confirmation from Congress. So if the appointees try to recover what they have spent—plus interest—in whatever way they can, we can be sure Malacañang will simply look away.

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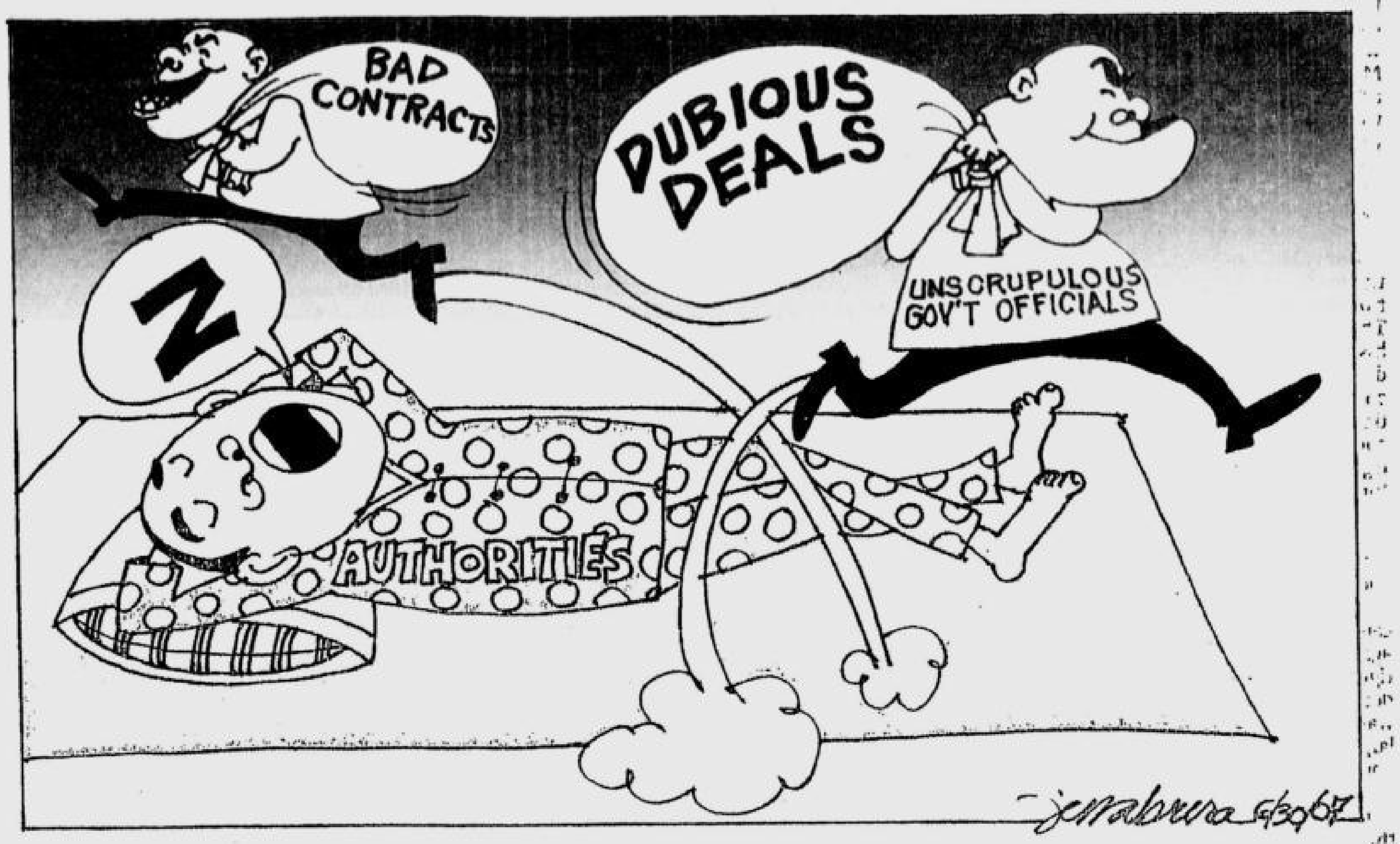


'Lacking in perfection and perfectibility'

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

THE TERM OF THE CANDIDATES ELECTED last May will begin today, to continue for three years except in the case of the senators, who will serve for six years unless their incumbency is terminated by the revision of the Constitution before 2010.

This appears to be the plan of President Macapagal-Arroyo, and Speaker Jose de Venecia as well, although she has called for the end of political bickering now that the elections are over. De Venecia may not be as purposeful because he still has a fight on his hands against the challenge of former governor and returning Rep. Pablo Garcia, a worthy opponent who many say can be a better leader to repair the ragged reputation of the House of Representatives.

The attempt of the Arroyo-De Venecia team to change the Constitution through the initiative was struck down by the Supreme Court last year and their subsequent plan to convert Congress into a constituent assembly for the same purpose was later scuttled by the Senate. Their mission was suspended by the election campaigns last month, but it is possible that they will try again this year because of their insistent ambition to remain in power after the end of Ms Arroyo's term in 2010 and the possible replacement of De Venecia as Speaker of the lower House.

President Arroyo's appeal for an end to the bitter squabbling during the past election rigmarole and the pursuit of a non-partisan endeavor to concentrate henceforth on the improvement of the welfare and future of our country deserves everyone's support. Provided, however, that it is sincere and not just another one of her rhetorical artifices like the one she made in 2002 that she would not run for the presidency in 2004. As for De Venecia, I do not recall his having abandoned his resolve to see the replacement of Congress with a unicameral Parliament where he expects to be prime minister.

Still recovering from the excitement and deceptions of the May elections, the people are at this time not enthusiastic over the resumption of the plan to re-examine and revise the Constitution. But even as Ms Arroyo has called for a political truce, she may again exercise the female privilege to change her mind and fan the political winds again in her obsession to be at the helm of the proposed parliamentary government. De Venecia will also be pushing for the revision of the present charter, although it is not certain that he and Ms Gloria will again be on the same side.

It is even doubtful that they will succeed this time to enlist their former followers in a revived effort to rewrite the Constitution according to their own designs. I say "former" because they may not have the same cohorts anymore, considering that they are practically lame ducks already, with Ms Gloria ending her present term in 2010 and De Venecia possibly even earlier with his replacement as head of the lower House by a resolute and formidable adversary.

I believe that the present charter, which was adopted 20 years ago, will sooner or later be revised by the critical people with no self-centered reasons as the present politicians. Their only purpose will be to correct the shortcomings of the otherwise generally praiseworthy document that, being a human document, is "lacking in perfection and perfectibility." I can only hope that this reexamination will be done later rather than sooner, at any rate not in the near future when the past election fever will still affect, and perhaps infect, the better judgment of the prospective framers.

As a humble student of the Constitution, I am one of the many citizens who believe it should be rewritten to correct some of its serious flaws we have discovered since its ratification on Feb. 2, 1987, with 76.27 percent of the voters in favor and only 22.74 percent against. Opposition to the draft, while spirited, was disorganized and consequently ineffective. Many people, while doubtful about some of its provisions and especially its length, nevertheless approved it in the end because they felt it would provide the stability the country sorely needed at that time.

There is not enough space in this article to discuss all the shortcomings of the Constitution, so I will mention only one basic requirement of a good written constitution, to wit, that it must be brief. The Constitution of 1987 is not brief; in fact, it is kilometric. One reason why the fundamental law should be brief is so it can attract the interest and even the study of the great document that should be familiar to the people in general instead of only lawyers and politicians. Just the inordinate length of the present Constitution is enough to caution the ordinary citizen that it is not a charter of liberty but a codification of trivialities.

To illustrate, its Preamble speaks of, among other goals, "a regime of truth, justice, freedom, love, equality, and peace." When I asked Justice Cecilia Muñoz Palma of the Constitutional Commission how much longer they would take to finish drafting the charter, she replied, "Only this morning, Commissioner (name withheld) took one-half hour explaining the meaning of love."

Buñag's fall the result of 'bad habit'

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

OK. SO JOSE MARIO BUÑAG WAS BOOTED out as Bureau of Internal Revenue commissioner supposedly because of the failure of the BIR to perform in terms of revenue collection. That the BIR failed to perform is evident from the P12.1 billion undercollection (relative to programmed or targeted collection) for the first quarter of 2007. That the shortfall was the BIR's fault (rather than because of external/macroeconomic forces beyond its control) is evident from the decomposition of that undercollection: P9.7 billion of it was due to "efficiency" problems—roughly translated, to factors within the BIR's ambit.

That there is doubt whether Buñag was booted out because of underperformance (hence, the "supposedly" in the preceding paragraph) is because per the same audit report that tracked the BIR's failures, the Bureau of Customs (BOC) also failed to perform. In fact, the latter's undercollection was greater than the BIR's relative to target—14.3 percent vs. 7.8 percent.

Stated differently, the BOC's programmed revenue collections accounted for 23 percent of the total of the two agencies', but it contributed 36 percent of the total undercollection. And while its "efficiency" problem was not as great as the BIR's, it still accounted for more than 50 percent of the BOC's collection shortfall. Yet, the BOC head was not booted out in the same summary fashion as Buñag. Nor, for that matter, was Finance Secretary Gary Teves, who has overall responsibility for the revenue-raising efforts of government.

Thus, Buñag's claim that he was made a scapegoat may not be farfetched at all, although not necessarily for the same reasons that he suggests. My guess is that the administration was getting very uncomfortable from the heat—the international credit rating agencies, as well as the multilaterals were in a frenzy of headshaking at the "stalling" of fiscal reforms (read: the deficit targets were not being met), and somebody had to take the fall. Buñag had the misfortune to be "it," period.

But if we think that putting another person in Buñag's place is going to solve the problem of a declining tax effort, we have another think coming. The decline started way before Buñag's time—the BIR's tax collections as a percentage of GDP (its tax effort) has slid from 11.5 percent in 2000 to 9.4 percent (for the first quarter of 2007). And lest the reader thinks that this is peanuts, every percentage point is equivalent to P60 billion, based on the 2006 nominal GDP. Moreover, there is no reason to think that the trend can be reversed by Buñag's successors.

Don't take my word for it. A very recent World Bank document—a project appraisal report for a proposed loan to us (National Program Support for Tax Administration Reform or NSSTAR) rates the overall risk for the project as "HIGH." Contributing to this assessment are specific risks such as "internal resistance to the reform" which is rated "high" even after "risk mitigation measures." Lack of sustained political commitment to reforms and a possible change in administration is rated a "medium" risk after risk mitigation measures are taken.

This, despite continuous efforts over the past 20 years on the part of various bilateral aid agencies and, of course, the multilaterals to help in reforming tax administration. I often wonder how much has been spent by the international partners on this effort, and what the post-project assessments read like. Which leads me to think that there is a necessary condition precedent to any effort in this regard, without which failure is inevitable, as we have experienced. And that is that President Macapagal-Arroyo herself must change a habit which apparently plagued her presidential predecessors as well.

What specifically are we talking about here? The habit of giving appointees the responsibilities attached to their respective positions without the corresponding authority. As head of their agencies, they are given "command responsibility"—except that it seems to be: "all responsibility" and "very little command" (this is the exact opposite of what is happening, it seems, in some military circles: "all command" and "no responsibility"). There are many examples of this: Cito Lorenzo, as agriculture secretary, and therefore responsible for the success of that sector, was hampered in his work by an undersecretary foisted on him. The subordinate had power over the agricultural purse and went his own way—or rather marched to the beat of someone else's drum. Karina David had similar problems with the undercutting of her authority (the difference with the rest was that she resigned in protest) during Erap Estrada's watch. The Comelec chair during the early part of Fidel Ramos' watch lobbied vainly against the appointment and confirmation to the Comelec of obviously partisan commissioners.

The habit is particularly vicious in the fiscal area. Finance secretaries (from Jimmy Ongpin on) were rarely consulted on the BIR and BOC heads, and the latter had little choice on their team as well, Teves and Buñag included.

It is a cardinal principle of management, after all, that a certain responsibility must go hand in hand with the corresponding authority. In the exercise of the management function, authority and responsibility must be coextensive. On the other hand, "subordinates" who are given responsibility but no command do not have to accept the job at all. So it is hard to sympathize with them.

But in the meantime, the Philippines suffers. Break the habit, please.

12 Cabinet members still twisting in CA

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE SUPREME COURT'S REJECTION OF AQUILINO Pimentel III's petition for a TRO on the Maguindanao canvassing paves the way for the proclamation of Juan Miguel Zubiri as the 12th senator-elect. What obviously disturbed the justices most was the prospect of disenfranchising the people of Maguindanao. This was evident when one justice asked Team Unity lawyer Romulo Makalintal what would happen to the Maguindanaoans if the canvass were to be stopped and the results thrown out. He replied, "Then, Your Honor, those proclaimed would then have to be termed senators of the Republic, but not of Maguindanao."

* * *

Bar topnotcher Koko Pimentel scored big in the media in gallantly defending his own position before the Court for over two hours last Thursday. But some observers felt that while his self-defense made for fabulous theatrics, it did not prove sensible. The justices asked him so many questions that his own veteran election lawyers, Leila de Lima or Sixto Brillantes, could have answered better. But Brillantes is right: there's still the battle in the Senate Electoral Tribunal.

* * *

The military says it can beat the New People's Army even without the help of the United States, and that it's even ahead of its self-imposed deadline to defeat the rebels by 2010. I'm sure the military can do this, as it has been scoring strategically against the NPA. But the AFP has to go back to the rigid discipline and training it was known for in past decades. It also has to improve in the propaganda war where the leftists are scoring far better, thanks largely to their expertise in manipulating public opinion and sympathetic elements in the media.

* * *

Energy Secretary Rafael Lotilla disclosed that 12 Cabinet members, including himself, remain unconfirmed by the Commission on Appointments two years after they were appointed by the President. To my mind, something is terribly wrong about this situation. Are the Cabinet members not confirmed because they are deemed unqualified by the CA panel, or is it because their documents are not complete? Or in the light of the recent revelations, is it because of their failure or refusal to deliver on favors asked by CA members?

By the way, I agree with Finance Secretary Margarito Teves that he shouldn't resign unless the President asks him. It's his foes in the CA who have been unmasked, not him. Besides, some of them are now out of Congress. As I said in an earlier column, Teves enjoys the respect of local and international finance people, something that can't be said of his foes.

* * *

One can't help but wonder why the stalemate at the CA, which affects 12 Cabinet members, has been allowed to go on for so long. Though they can be given ad interim appointments, the "non-confirmation" of the Cabinet members can affect their efficiency and concentration. There ought to be a more meaningful dialogue on this problem. The Legislative Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac), which is composed of both executive and legislative officials, could be the proper vehicle to iron this out.

The CA's prolonged failure to confirm nominations doesn't yield much rhyme or reason—too much is subjective and whimsical. There's the Senate president who, as CA chair voting only in a tie, could cause a nomination to be prioritized, or shelved for eternity. Thus, while Sen. Franklin Drilon was at the helm, media felt that the reason he rejected the appointment of his *kasimanwa*, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, went beyond the way the latter parts his hair.

Rallying support is crucial to confirmation. I recall that when Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita faced the CA sub-committee chaired by Imee Marcos in 2004, various senators crossed party lines to praise him (e.g., Juan Ponce Enrile, Rodolfo Biazon and Richard Gordon). Sen. Miriam Santiago had earlier grilled him on his being a non-lawyer in that prime Cabinet post and his being a psywar expert, just like her archrival, Fidel Ramos. But after hearing the praises heaped on him, the feisty *senadora* withdrew whatever objection she was contemplating.

* * *

Ridiculous is the allegation published in the Korean Herald about a Filipino diplomat accused of shoplifting last November 2006 a karaoke machine and a bottle of perfume at a military base in South Korea. The DFA later identified the diplomat as Philippine Ambassador to Seoul Susan Castrence who dismissed the allegation as "unfounded." In the first place, how can a medium-built, 66-year-old woman carrying a handbag "steal" a karaoke machine? I have known Susan for almost 50 years now (our friendship dates back to our UP days) and I can certainly vouch for her character. She has served the foreign service in various capacities and in many posts around the world, honorably and competently. I'm sad that this smear has to happen as she is about to end her distinguished career.

* * *

Castrence explained that on that shopping trip to the base commissary, she brought along a karaoke chip bought there earlier. Her intention was to look for a similar chip, this time with children's songs, as a Christmas gift for her granddaughter in Manila. Failing to find one, she put her chip back in her bag and, probably the camera caught her in that act. She also passed by a perfume counter and tried a test-bottle but didn't make any purchase. Castrence said that before she left, she allowed a security officer, who was possibly alerted by the cameras, to check her bag, and he found only her chip but no new chip or perfume bottle.

Castrence's mistake obviously was that she failed to declare her chip with the store personnel upon arrival, which is imperative when one brings any item to a store. As she now knows, it was a costly mistake, but the accusation of shoplifting is most ridiculous.

Migration as an Apec issue

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

MIGRATION WAS ONE OF THE ISSUES COVERED in the final statement of the 12th Apec Women Leaders' Network, but it wasn't immediately apparent. This was because migration—and migrant labor—was phrased as "labor mobility," with the declaration expressing the WLN's intent "to discuss with Abac (the Apec Business Advisory Council) the issue of labor mobility and ensure that Abac's recommendation to the 2007 Leaders' meeting takes into account the implications for women, in particular the protection and safeguarding of the rights of migrant women."

As expected migration issues within Apec were championed primarily by the Philippines, which is one of only a few "sending" countries within the Asia-Pacific region, dominated by dynamic economies and thus on the receiving end of migration.

Reports have it that it is a Filipino delegate, businesswoman and civic leader Doris Magsaysay-Ho, who is working to have the Abac address the issues of labor migration and the need for governments to respect and protect the rights of women migrants in countries where they work.

At the WLN meet, Philippine delegation head Myrna Yao, who also chairs the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), spoke at the panel discussion on "Women and Global Challenges through Sustainable Development" and focused on the gender dimensions of labor migration.

The Philippines "has the highest number of labor migrants" in Southeast Asia, Yao noted, with some 4.8 million Filipinos working abroad. And while the country "has benefited from remittances of overseas workers which accounted for at least 9 percent of the gross national product," she added that there is "the inevitable social cost of offshore migration, such dysfunctional families, psychological costs to those who leave and (are) left behind, and exploitation and abuse" to account for.

* * *

WHILE much of labor migration takes place through regulated channels, Yao said "irregular types of migration" are quite common as well. "This reflects the push factor of poverty, unemployment, and lack of economic opportunities in their immediate community and (the) pull factor of immediate employment and higher wages in receiving economies."

As a consequence, irregular work or undocumented migration has "become a major problem in the host countries because of social costs and security risks," giving rise to punitive measures that often impinge upon the human rights of migrants, and even contradict the host countries' own laws granted to women and workers.

Other emerging issues mentioned were gender-specific problems of women workers, the negative effects of skills depletion in sending countries, the "brain drain," specifically the high migration rate of health professionals, and over-reliance on remittances from overseas workers.

What prevents governments, particularly the Philippine government, from crafting more supportive policies for women migrant workers? Among the reasons, said Yao, was the need for "collecting and using sex disaggregated social indicators such as invisible underemployment based on skills mismatch," mainly between the jobs available to women and the skills they possess; "women's enrollment rates; improving job equality in the agricultural sector and development within the rural non-farm sector; encouraging investment and job creation; managing external and internal migration; formal sector growth; and child labor."

* * *

THE APEC, said Yao, "being a non-binding regional trade organization (that) genuinely practices open regionalism, is an ideal platform to facilitate the movement of people, trade, services and goods." The annual gathering, she added, could facilitate "learning from each others' experiences on how to manage and cope better with regular or irregular flow of labor migration, particularly by affording protection to and safeguarding the rights of migrant workers, especially women.

Yao urged the Apec human resource development working group, particularly the sub-committee on labor and social protection networks, to initiate policy debates on labor migration of unskilled or semi-skilled workers and "identify social protection measures that need to be put in place."

The NCRFW chair also called on the network to "support the generation of sex-disaggregated data on labor migration as a top priority to aid in collecting accurate information for informed discussion, policy and decision-making, and value (women's) contribution to the economy. Finally, Yao said, the WLN should "support and encourage the participation of women in formulating gender-responsive policies and plans on issues related to finance, trade and investments, economic planning, and (of course!) labor migration."

* * *

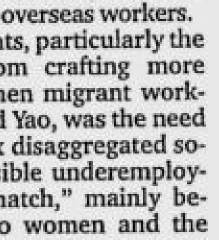
GIVEN this final recommendation, it's imperative, more than ever, that the WLN find a stronger voice to more directly address the policies and agreements hammered out at the annual Apec summit of leaders.

Andrina Lever, a co-founder of the WLN, declared it "an outrage" that there are only five women members among the 63-member Abac, whose members are appointed by the Apec heads of government. It's also quite puzzling why the five women within Abac are not themselves part of the WLN, since it is presumed that they would be the natural allies and spokespersons of women within the Asia-Pacific economies.

Then again, even with WLN, gender concerns were hardly a priority, despite the rhetoric of women empowerment. Speakers tended to gloss over the darker implications of labor migration: for instance, trafficking and abuse of domestic workers. Perhaps before they appoint themselves representatives of Asia-Pacific women, the WLN should first embrace the concerns of the most disadvantaged of these women.

Sharm el-Sheikh redux

WORLD VIEW



Shlomo Ben-Ami

DRIVEN BY A COMMON FEAR OF ISLAMIC FUNdamentalism, and by a false assumption that it is an illegitimate political force, the Middle East's so-called "moderates" have once again gathered at the Egyptian seaside resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, the traditional venue for emergency regional summits, to rally "moderates" against "extremists."

In the spring of 1996, the so-called "moderates"—Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak, Jordan's King Hussein, Yasser Arafat and even some representatives of the Gulf dynasties—convened in Sharm el-Sheikh with US President Bill Clinton and United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan in a desperate bid to block radical Islam's emergence. They were also expected to give an electoral boost to Prime Minister Shimon Peres of Israel who, severely undermined by Hamas' devastating campaign of suicide terrorism, was on the verge of electoral defeat at the hands of Benjamin Netanyahu.

But Islamic fundamentalism remained unimpressed. Both its jihadist and political identity have, indeed, only gained momentum ever since.

In October 2000, Sharm el-Sheikh was the scene of another summit, with most of the same actors. This time, the call went out for an end to the Palestinian Intifada and for Israelis and Palestinians to reach a final peace agreement. Both objectives were endorsed by all the participants; neither was implemented.

As one of the players in that summit, I understand the reason for the gap between what was agreed by the "moderates" and the harsh realities that have driven the "extremists" forward. The only way Arafat could stop the Intifada and stem the advance of Hamas was through an especially generous peace deal from Israel. But such a deal became impossible precisely because the Intifada had raised Palestinian expectations to such heights that it became impossible for Israel to meet them.

Notwithstanding Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's commendable gestures at Sharm el-Sheikh in 2007, the summit's achievements are bound to be short-lived. It is unrealistic to believe that transferring to the Palestinians tax revenues that are owed to them, removing a limited number of checkpoints in the occupied West Bank, and even releasing 250 Fatah prisoners "with no blood on their hands" will calm the Palestinian volcano, and thus enhance Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' leadership and Fatah's edge over Hamas. Indeed, all indications are that Hamas might soon boost its popularity by exchanging Israeli corporal Gilad Shalit for even more prisoners, including some "with blood on their hands."

This alliance of Middle East moderates comes with a price that neither Israel nor the Bush administration seems ready to pay. The Israeli-American strategy of driving a wedge between Gaza and the West Bank while shunning negotiations on a peace settlement that could give Abbas the ultimate tool to undermine Hamas is a policy at war with itself.

Moreover, no matter how critical the moderate Arabs may be of the Hamas coup in Gaza, the Arab leaders cannot afford the domestic fallout of shunning Hamas. Indeed, Mubarak has already called for a resumption of inter-Palestinian dialogue, which might lead to yet another attempt at a national unity government, the same kind of government with which both Israel and the United States refused to do business.

Abbas is being asked to play for high stakes—defeating Hamas and with it the cause of Islamic fundamentalism in the region—with inadequate resources. And, by mortgaging his entire Middle East policy to the concept of an "ideological confrontation" against the forces of evil, Bush is putting his entire strategy on the weary shoulders of a defeated Palestinian president without really providing him with the necessary tools.

Worse still, by ladling money and arms to Abbas without offering him a political horizon that would deepen his support among ordinary Palestinians, while at the same time imprisoning all Hamas leaders in the West Bank, Israel and the United States are condemning Abbas to appear like a collaborator in the eyes of his people.

Of course the Arabs are not free of blame either. No Israeli government will risk making a far-reaching peace offer to a Palestinian Authority whose rule is characterized by abdication and anarchy. Hamas' emergence as a formidable military force also reflects the Egyptians' inept performance in preventing the smuggling of weapons into Gaza. Taming Hamas is in Egypt's interest, but it refuses to pay the price of a direct confrontation because that might lead Egyptian forces to be perceived as Israel's protectors.

Indeed, Mubarak's strategic vision is desperately narrow. His role as a broker of sorts is mostly aimed at endearing himself to the United States, where Congress is highly critical of his human rights record. On his home front, he needs to cultivate, at the lowest possible price, an image as a champion of the Palestinian cause. The latest Sharm el-Sheikh summit is also a message to the Saudis: Cairo, not Mecca, is the center of Middle East politics.

Calling for Israeli concessions is perfectly legitimate, even necessary. But the credibility of such demands is undermined by the Arabs' inability to alleviate Palestinian misery and, no less importantly, by their failure to help the Palestinians face the hard choices they will need to make, if an orderly Palestinian state is ever to emerge.

Project Syndicate

Shlomo Ben-Ami, a former Israeli foreign minister, now serves as vice president of the Toledo International Centre for Peace. His latest book is "Scars of War, Wounds of Peace: The Israeli-Arab Tragedy."

Reading people

YOUNG BLOOD

Michael G. Aurelio

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

ONE OF MY GUILTY PLEASURES IS READING PEOPLE.

I do not remember how I acquired the art, but something tells me I got it from my mother's side of the family. They are notorious for that. My uncle, a top executive in a large corporation, says that because he has seen and interviewed so many applicants already, it takes him only a few seconds to know what he needs to know from the applicant. I may not have honed my skill to that level yet, but I think I am getting better at it.

It all begins with observation, much like how a doctor observes the patient even before he asks for symptoms or the problem at hand. A game I play with my mother is observing other people in restaurants, in nearby tables. Even if we just glance at them, we can tell from what they order, their faces and their gestures if, for example, a couple is happy or in the middle of a fight; or if the parents are having a hard time raising their family; or if there is something unusual going on, like an extramarital affair.

It is when someone is first introduced to me that I usually apply my art. First, I look at the warmth (or indifference) of his greeting or the strength of his handshake. Then I try to note his aura or the spirit he exudes. From his aura, I can see immediately if the person is a happy spirit or in despair. The aura initially tells me of the person's moods and becomes the gateway to learning something about the basic make-up of his character, i.e., whether or not he is an introvert or an extrovert, a feeler or a thinker, an optimist or a pessimist.

Then I observe the face. The face can be the most transparent window to the soul or an opaque screen. It can speak volumes about the person or prevent others from knowing anything more about him. The face reveals whether he is insecure or hiding something; if he is wearing a mask or putting up a façade; his maturity or childishness as evidenced by the knowledge contained in the eyes; whether he has seen the world or shuns it, or if knows himself or is clueless.

I also observe if the person can look me in the eye and remain level with me. If he tends to look up, he is either ambivalent, worried (about something in his mind) or he sees himself as higher than me. If he tends to look down, he is most likely a shy person but it might also be that he is hiding something from you, like animosity or envy. Generally, I distrust people who cannot look me in the eye. They are up to something, and often it is no good.

Then, of course, come the words that they speak. This is easy. I am sure everyone knows more or less the kind of person one is talking to from the words he chooses and the way he uses them. Most people talk in the same manner, using the same expressions and giving the same opinions. And like everyone else, I take special note of those who stand out: those who are very eloquent and wise (these usually go together); those who only smile and give curt answers, and usually have no opinion (they also go together); and those who are loud and "full of sound and fury signifying nothing"; and those who are silent.

But it's the silent ones who interest me most, either because I cannot read their minds or because they seem to be too snobbish to speak, or perhaps because I suspect them to be deep thinkers. Mystery is formed around that silence and so I am attracted to the silent ones. Their silence challenges me to know more about them and urges me to wait. They hold you off, unlike those who reveal all of themselves too quickly in a few words, leaving you not wishing to know anything more about them. As the old adage goes, better to be thought a fool and be silent than to open your mouth and remove all doubts.

Sadly I am almost always right about the people I read. Why sadly? Because then they become too predictable and, therefor, very boring.

I can just imagine how fortune-tellers feel, because we practice the same craft after all. I bet they often ask themselves, "Will there ever be something new?" Nothing human is alien to us. And the script we read and the cards we are dealt cannot be much different.

The secret to reading other people is reading yourself—being aware of what you show or hide to other people, mastering your emotions and moods, and above all, as the Oracle at Delphi exhorts us to do, knowing your self. I can only read into others what I have read in myself.

But there are limits I imposed to my practice of this art. I never read people I love. I only use it on friends if I could help them with my advice after making them open up about themselves. We are most transparent to others as we are most opaque to ourselves. Thus, a friend who can see through us can be most helpful.

One lesson I have learned, the hard way, is to never offer my thoughts unless I am asked. For, as one should have guessed early on, herein lies the danger of applying this art: you could be dismissed as a jerk who thinks he knows everything. Being most often correct does not justify what I do. Some people simply prefer to stick to what they know about themselves and live a lie. While I do not profess to carry the message of truth, I cannot tell a lie. Thus, I have learned the virtue of silence.

I know why idols do not speak.

Michael G. Aurelio, 27, graduated with a BS Management in Communications Technology degree from the Ateneo de Manila University in 2002 and taught philosophy for four years. He is working on his thesis for his master's in philosophy in the same university.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Great advances

"Humanity's greatest advances are not in its discoveries, but in how those discoveries are applied to reduce inequality."

—Microsoft co-founder and world's richest person Bill Gates

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Fr. Bossi's kidnapping: the challenge

FR. GIANCARLO BOSSI OF THE PONTIFICAL Institute for Foreign Missions (PIME) is not the first Christian religious to be abducted in Mindanao. And his case will certainly add to the stereotyping of our Muslim brothers and sisters who have long been branded as "terrorists," even though there are only a few of them who are sowing terror in our midst.

We are hoping that no harm will come to Father Bossi. But at the same time, we seek earnestly that his abduction will not undermine Muslim-Christian relations. The abduction of Father Bossi should not be a hindrance to the ongoing dialogue and sharing among communities of faith in Mindanao: in particular, the processes initiated by peace-oriented civil society groups; and the inter-religious dialogue which has been endorsed by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines and by the Association of the Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP).

The Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission-AMRSP reiterates its stand that a genuine poverty alleviation program, not a military campaign, is the long-term solution to the Mindanao problem. The program should address the worsening economic conditions of the people of Mindanao, especially the Muslims. Poverty has long been identified, by civil society and government alike, as the main cause of insurgency thereabouts. Moreover, a sustained and genuine implementation of the agreements in the peace talks should also be pursued.

Declaring an unequivocal military campaign against so-called "Muslim terrorists" will only prolong the strife and violence in Mindanao, and the suffering of our brothers and sisters. Mindanao's "wounds" are still consciously and constantly being opened despite many years of collective efforts to heal the wounds through various peace initiatives.

Let us not allow Father Bossi's kidnapping to hamper our efforts to build a culture of peace. Let every peace-loving citizen of our country pray for a quick resolution to the crisis. Let all wars and conflicts cease. Let peace reign in our hearts, in the hearts of both Christians and Muslims. Let peace rule our land.

—CHARITO JOCSON PINALAS,
executive secretary,
Justice, Peace and Integrity
of Creation-Association
of the Major Religious Superiors
in the Philippines; TERENCE OSORIO,
Canossian Sisters-JPIC, 8 Mayumi St.,
UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City

Senators are not fashion models

THIS REFERS TO THE LETTER OF ANA MA. Esperanza Ragrario titled "Immature politics, disrespectful solons." (INQUIRER, 6/25/07)

We really do perceive things superficially at first, but we should not stop at the surface; there's an endless horizon in this world. Discern.

I was bothered after reading Ragrario's letter, explicitly decrying the informal attire senator-elect Noynoy Aquino wore to the proclamation of the first 10 winners in the senatorial race. I did not see anything objectionable there. Shallow is the proposition that says, "By what he wears a person must be judged; and thus shall he gain respect and trust as well."

Senators are not fashion models. They should not be judged by the clothes they wear but by the legislation and causes they fight for. The question should be: Do they champion the people's interests?

As to senator-elect Alan Peter Cayetano, it was not right for her to conclude that he did not know how to sing the national anthem "Lupang Hinirang," just because his lips' movements were not in sync with the lyrics of the song.

Nevertheless, if Ragrario is right in her observation, that would be pretty alarming—considering that Cayetano will soon be sitting as a senator. The singing of the national anthem is a public affirmation of one's love of country; by singing it wholeheartedly, one imbibes its essence.

I am not a supporter of the two senators-elect. I just find insensible and illogical some of Ragrario's standards for gauging maturity.

—SALOME G. SARO,
315 Bancal, Meycauayan City

GSIS cites achievements and eCard's pluses

IN HIS JUNE 25 COLUMN, RAMON FAROLAN "revisited" the Government Service Insurance System and collected unverified information.

He cited a "damning report" made by the Department of Finance, which "was never made available to the public"; a survey (that came out in a newspaper as a press release) that found the GSIS a corrupt agency; and former Education Undersecretary Juan Miguel Luz's unfounded gripe about the use of eCard Plus as an ATM card. Farolan even tried to link the billions of income the GSIS has generated with the Enron and World Com scandals.

Let me present the side of GSIS.

From the time Winston Garcia took the helm of the GSIS in 2001, the GSIS has achieved the following:

- Grow its assets from P200 billion to P430 billion by the end of 2006.
- Upped its gross revenues from P57 billion to P84.6 billion in 2006; its reserves and surplus from P195 billion to P399 billion in 2006; its net operating revenues from P25 billion to P41.56 billion in 2006; its payment of claims and benefits, including pension, from P21.9 billion in 2001 to P32 billion in 2006.
- Achieved an actuarial surplus of P23 billion from an actuarial deficit of P25 billion;
- Removed the limits to the Average Monthly Compensation, enabling GSIS retirees to receive the full benefits prescribed by law.
- Increased the loanable amount for salary loans—from a maximum of two months to 10 months of the member's basic salary.
- Reduced the interest rate for housing loans from 12 percent to only 6 percent, applying the same even to existing loans and acquired GSIS properties.
- Using homegrown talent, electronic and online services, developed G-W@PS and eCard Plus, enabling members to apply for loans in any G-W@PS kiosks all over the country and to receive the proceeds in real time from any of the 6,800 ATMs all over the country.
- Computerized its database and processes, thus purging the system of no less than 1.4 million dubious and fictitious members and pensioners.

Also worth mentioning: the GSIS increased its collection efficiency: from a low of 68 percent in 2001 to 94 percent in 2006.

We likewise take exception to Farolan's effort to demonize the eCard. Certainly, like any new modernization program, the eCard Plus System raised a lot of questions and concerns. But all in all, we believe that the system is the best tool available to protect our members and pensioners against identity theft, which had long plagued not only the GSIS but also all other pension funds around the world.

The eCard also makes for faster transaction with members and pensioners receiving electronically the proceeds of benefits directly from the GSIS. It has effectively put out of business the fixers and middle men who had long preyed on members and pensioners.

We are sure Farolan who, we understand, had served as customs commissioner, would appreciate these feats.

—ELLA E. VALENCERINA,
vice president,
Public Affairs Office,
Government Service Insurance System,
Financial Center, Pasay City

How milk formula 'kills'

IN THE ARTICLE TITLED, "INFANT DEATHS not only due to formula—PHAP" (INQUIRER, 6/26/07), the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines described as "misleading" and "not supported by national or international statistics" the claims of local and international health organizations that thousands of babies die every year because of complications brought about by milk formula.

I would like to cite some statistics and studies for PHAP's members to read:

The Philippines has among the highest infant mortality rates in Asia. As of 2007, the infant mortality rate (babies dying before their first birthday) is estimated at 22.12 deaths per 1,000 live births. We currently rank 102nd among 217 countries surveyed (http://www.indexmundi.com/philippines/infant_mortality_rate.html).

Data from the Department of Health show that among the top 10 killers are pneumonia and diarrhea (http://www. doh. gov.ph/kp/statistics/infant_ deaths).

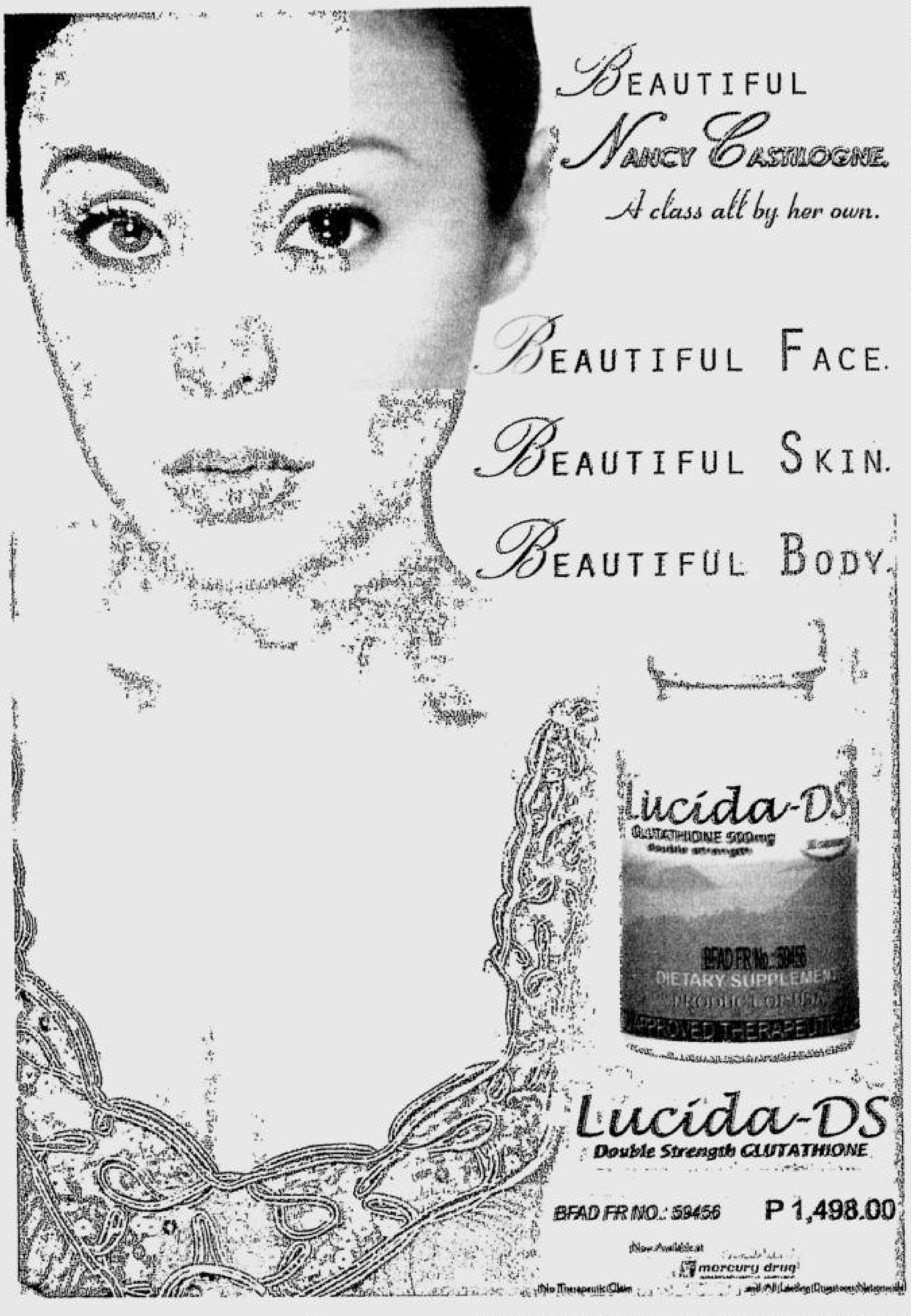
Diarrhea is caused by viruses or bacteria carried by contaminated water and dirty hands. The use of infant formula requires water that may be contaminated. This increases the chances of diarrhea contamination. Formula containers can also rust or be contaminated by fungi.

Breast milk, on the other hand, needs neither preparation nor the use of (potentially contaminated) water. Its containers don't rust either. But the best news about breast milk is, it contains antibodies that protect babies against diarrhea and pneumonia.

Where is the evidence to this claim? A World Health Organization study found that breast milk even affords "continued protection ... during the second year of life." It also raised "the question of the safety of breast milk substitutes in families of low socioeconomic status."

While it's true that infant deaths are caused not only by formula, the inappropriate use of this substitute to breast milk in a developing country like the Philippines certainly contributes to infant deaths. Most infant deaths occur among poor families that cannot afford fuel to sterilize bottles and teats, that do not have access to safe water, that can barely afford the expensive milk formula. For these infants, breast-feeding is truly and simply life-saving.

—EMMA A. LLANTO, MD, FPPS,
48 Cendana St.,
Villamor Airbase, Pasay City



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7 gov't soldiers killed in NPA raid

BUTUAN CITY—AT LEAST SEVEN GOVERNMENT troops—one soldier and six militiamen—were killed when New People's Army (NPA) rebels raided an Army patrol base in Las Nieves, Agusan del Norte, police said Friday.

Chief Supt. Antonio Nañas, Caraga police chief, said the rebels managed to seize the patrol base in Barangay Lawan-lawan during a raid late Tuesday evening.

He said the soldiers and the militiamen manning the patrol base tried to repulse the advancing rebels but they were outnumbered.

He did not say how many soldiers and militiamen were manning the patrol base at that time but said the rebels numbered about 70.

Execution

A military source said during the attack, only one government soldier was instantly killed.

"The rebels took away the six militiamen and executed them later," the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity for lack of authority to speak, said, adding that the bodies were recovered a few meters away from the detachment.

Nañas said the military's 402nd Infantry Brigade and the police have sent troops to track down the fleeing rebels.

The NPA, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), has stepped up its campaign against the government after the collapse of the peace talks in 2004.

The National Democratic Front (NDF) pulled out of the Norwegian-brokered talks after it failed to convince the government to urge the United States to remove the communist movement from its list of terror groups.

US help

Recently, the United States said it was willing to help in crushing the communist insurgency if asked to do so, but military chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon said the Armed Forces of the Philippines has the capability to face the rebels.

The military has given itself until 2010 to defeat the communists.

In Davao City, Mayor Rodrigo Duterte said saber-rattling or a military campaign does not solve an issue like the communist insurgency.

Duterte, peace and order adviser to President Macapagal-Arroyo, said the government must again seriously consider talking peace with the NDF because violence can only be solved through peaceful means.

"I believe that the government must open all avenues with the New People's Army," he said.

The feisty mayor, who openly admits being friends with communist leaders, said the peace and security problem in the country, especially in Mindanao, will only get more complicated if the government uses violence to contain the insurgency.

Aside from pursuing talks with the communist rebels, Duterte said the government should also resume talking with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Face the problem

"We have this fear but we don't have to be paralyzed. We have to face the reality head-on and we will do everything, if not to prevent violence from erupting, to give justice. But what we have to do is to understand and talk to them. But if we will fail on this, law and order must prevail," Duterte said.

The rebel offensive came amid the ongoing street executions of leftist activists. Human rights groups have counted 800 victims of the so-called extra-judicial killings since Ms Arroyo came to power in 2002. *Franklin Caliguid and Jeffrey Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao*

GOD'S CHILD

ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

A child falls asleep during Mass in a church in La Paz, Iloilo City, as her grandmother watches over her.

Grenade injures 4 kids in market

KORONADAL CITY—AT LEAST four children were injured in an explosion at the public market in Barangay Lamian in Surallah, South Cotabato around 5 p.m. on Thursday, police said yesterday.

Supt. Robert Kiunisala, South Cotabato police director, said the explosion was caused by a rifle grenade, which a group of children had earlier found in a garbage bin.

"After they found the grenade, they went to the public market, which is already empty at that time," he said.

Kiunisala said the children, aged 7 to 9 years old, toyed with the grenade until it accidentally fell and went off.

He identified the victims as Edna Español, 7; Erap Tupas, 8; El-el Maribao, 9 and year-old Jona Jasper Brazil, all children of market vendors.

The four children were rushed to the hospital for shrapnel wounds but Kiunisala could not say if any of them was in serious condition.

He said they were investigating who placed the explosive in the garbage bin and what motive could be.

Last month, a car bomb was left in the middle of a busy street in Surallah.

The car bomb, blamed on the Jemaah Islamiyah, was later disarmed by government bomb experts with the help of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents participating in the RP-US military exercises in Central Mindanao.

In Digos City, police authorities said they have already filed murder charges against a suspect in the June 15 explosion aboard a Weena bus in Bansalan, Davao del Sur.

The explosion killed eight people and wounded more than a dozen others.

Chief Insp. Royina Garma, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG), identified the suspect as Abdul Ahad alias Rodel Abadia, a resident of Pagalungan, Maguindanao.

He said Ahad, who belongs to the Alkobar extortion gang, was positively identified by his neighbors through the artist's sketch produced by the police from description of witnesses.

Ahad was also the subject of an earlier arrest order for allegedly extorting money from the bus firm in 1999.

Earlier in San Fernando City in La Union, a homemade bomb exploded at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, wounding a bystander, police said.

Investigators said the bomb was placed in a garbage can on Tavera and Burgos Streets in San Fernando.

The bystander, Lito Aragon, was hit by shrapnels sprayed by the bomb.

He was taken to the Ilocos Training and Regional Medical Center in the city and was declared out of danger. Police were investigating the incident. *Jeoffrey Maitem, Eldie S. Aguirre and Orlando Dinoy, Inquirer Mindanao and Hanna Lacsamana, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
DR. JOSE FABELLA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
Manila

INVITATION TO RE-BID

The Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital invites interested bidders / contractors to bid for:

Name of Project : Provision of LAUNDRY SERVICES
(Period covered : July to December 2007)

Approved Budget : P2,536,730.00

	Estimated Qty.	Unit Cost
Lot I	145,000 pcs.	P 5.50 / pc.
Lot II	179,000 pcs.	9.65 / pc.
Lot III	450 pcs.	26.40 / pc.

Project Location : Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital
Lope de Vega St., Sta. Cruz, Manila

Bid documents may be secured at the BAC Secretariat, Administrative Office. For details, please contact telephone no. 735-7144.

All particulars relative to eligibility, bid security, performance, pre-bid, opening of bids, evaluation, post-qualification and award shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its implementing rules and regulations.

Schedule of Activities:

	Date	Venue / Time
Pre-bid Conference	July 9, 2007	Reception Room, 10:00 am
Bid Opening	July 20, 2007	Reception Rm., 10:00 am

The DJFMH reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality found therein and to accept such bids as may be considered advantageous to the government.

The DJFMH-BAC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or losses that may be incurred in the preparation of bids nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) ELISEA S. MARQUEZ, M.D., D.P.B.A.
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–June 30, 2007)

Home Guaranty Corporation
Office of the President

INVITATION TO BID

The HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION (HGC) is offering for sale, in cash or installment, the "leasehold rights" of the following properties:

	PROPERTY LOCATION	TYPE	FLOOR AREA	SELLING PRICE	REMARKS
1	APEC Villa No. 9 Triboa Bay, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Olongapo City	one storey house	436	32,471,210.00	fully furnished, vacant
2	APEC Villa No. 10 Triboa Bay, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Olongapo City	two storey house	440	31,872,320.00	fully furnished, vacant
3	APEC Villa No. 11 Triboa Bay, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Olongapo City	two storey house	433	31,982,875.00	fully furnished, vacant

General Guidelines:

1. The sale of the property shall be on an "AS-IS-WHERE-IS" basis.
2. All proposals shall be submitted on or before July 9, 2007 at 2:00 P.M.
3. All bidders may offer to buy the property in cash or installment term. Only cash sales shall be entitled to discounts:
4. Terms of Payment
    4.1. For CASH SALE, the following discount rates apply:
    10%, spot cash
    6%, if paid in full within 30 days from signing of sales documents
    4%, if paid in full within 60 days from signing of sales documents
    2%, if paid in full within 90 days from signing of sales documents
    4.2 For INSTALLMENT SALE (discounts are not applicable)
    20% minimum downpayment
    Balance payable in equal monthly installments over a maximum of twenty (20) years at eight percent (8%) interest per annum
    4.3 LEASE TO OWN
    Maximum Term – Five (5) years
    Minimum Rental Rate – P100,000.00
    Other conditions:
    a. Rental payments shall be credited to the total selling price depending on which year the option to buy is exercised:

Period within which lessee may exercise option to buy	% Application
1st year	100
2nd year	90
3rd year	80
4th year	70
5th year	60

    b. Annual escalation rate on monthly rental fee : 6%
    c. Other standard terms and conditions under HGC's Rent-To-Own Program
5. Bidding documents can be secured from the Asset Management Disposition Group located at the 4th Floor, Jade Building, 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P5,000.00.
6. The sealed bids should be dropped in the designated drop box located at the Asset Management Disposition Group, 4th Floor, Jade Building, 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City on or before July 9, 2007.
7. All bidders are enjoined to inspect the property before submitting their bids.
8. The award of the sale covering the property shall be based on the offer determined to be most advantageous to the Corporation.

For inquiries, please call our Marketing and Sales Department at 896-04-25 or 897-31-49 or visit our Head Office at the aforementioned address.

THE CORPORATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL OFFERS AND TO WAIVE ANY DEFECTS OR TO ACCEPT SUCH OFFERS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE CORPORATION.

(SGD) RAFAEL P. DE LOS SANTOS
VICE PRESIDENT
ASSET MANAGEMENT AND
DISPOSITION GROUP

(PDI–June 30 & July 1, 2007)

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on July 19, 2007, 2:00 p.m., 12th Floor, Suite 4, Executive Lounge of the DBP Head Office, Sen.Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties on CASH BASIS:

CODE NO.	DESCRIPTION	AREA (sq.m.)	LOCATION	Minimum Bid
REAL ESTATE METRO MANILA				
RM-DGP-01	Residential lot (TCT T-104651) with apartment bldgs. & imp.	280	Talon Dos, Las Piñas City	P 3,401,800.00
BACOLOD				
PF-GT-01	Residential lot (TCT T-310889)	600	Lot 2-E Villa Socorro Subd., Brgy Taculing	P 840,000.00
CAVITE				
AM-RP-18	Residential lot (TCT No. T-1131445) with bldg. & imp.	32	Lot 18 Blk. 10 Philhomes Ville I Subd., Toclong, Kawit	P 178,700.00
GENERAL SANTOS				
PF-GT-02	2-parcels of residential lot (TCT Nos. T-110898 & T-110897)	744	Lots 1 and 2 Blk. 3, Falgui Subd. Brgy. Lagao	P 445,800.00
KIDAPAWAN				
PF-GT-03	Residential lot (TCT T-111284) with bldg & imp.	518	Robles Subd., Sudapin	P 465,300.00
IRIGA				
AM-ML-19	3-parcels of commercial lot (TCT Nos. 2004, 2005, 2006) with hotel & commercial bldgs., machinery, furniture & fixtures	5,154	San Francisco, Iriga City	P 25,000,000.00
RIZAL				
AM-MC-20	2-parcels of agricultural lots (TCT Nos. M-100249 & M-100250) with bldgs. & imp.	28,720	Brgy. Quisao, Pililla	P 2,050,000.00
PF-GT-04	Residential lot (TCT T-702931)	128	Lot 22 Blk. 23 Pomelo St Greenwoods Executive Village Phase VI, San Juan, Cainta	P 656,200.00

BIDDERS ARE REMINDED:
1. To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before the bidding;
2. To submit in DBP's official bid form available at the AMD-Acquired Assets, Ground Floor, DBP Head Office during office hours; and
3. To be on time. No bids will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commences. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers: 892-1566/893-7172 or 818-9511 locals 2158/2159/2166 for code starting with AM, 815-1608 or 818-9511 local 2715 for PFGT and (075) 523-7835 or 818-9511 loc. 1408 for RM-DGP.

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI–June 30 & July 1, 2007)

'Jueteng' thrives all over Sorsogon

SORSOGON CITY—"JUETENG" CONTINUES to thrive with impunity in the province of Sorsogon and right under the nose of the Philippine National Police despite assurances from authorities that they have already stamped it out.

This was proven after members of the local media initiated a raid in a jueteng den which resulted in the arrest of two collectors Thursday morning.

The raid was conducted following a tip from residents near the gambling den about the ongoing jueteng operations.

Prior to the operation, the media men surrendered their cell phones to another media man to ensure that no leakage would jeopardize the raid.

The group proceeded to the address given, which was just about a kilometer from the city police station.

After confirming the presence of the jueteng operators and the bet collectors, who were at that time remitting their collections, the media men talked with Supt. Formoso Argarin, Sorsogon City chief of police, and police provincial director Senior Supt. Joel Regondola, at the police provincial command and requested for police assistance in raiding the illegal gambling activity.

The two police officials reluctantly granted the request and provided three policemen as escorts to the media group who went on their way to Barangay Cabid-an here.

When the media group, however, arrived at the place everybody was already gone except for two bet collectors who apparently had just arrived and were not informed of the impending raid. *Bobby Q. Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

VINCENT CABREZA/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

BAGUIO SKYLINE
Rains and frequent traffic jams have become the norm in the summer capital now that school season has started and public works employees rush to complete projects delayed by the midterm elections. But this beautiful skyline at dusk makes up for that.

CHR, PNP send teams to probe eviction clash

BAGUIO CITY—THE COMMISSION ON HUman Rights and the Cordillera police have each sent independent fact-finding teams to Rizal, Kalinga, to unearth the reasons behind a 10-hour gun battle between a group of settlers and a team of policemen and soldiers on Monday.

Nine of the people who engaged government troops in the gunfight died while at least 10 policemen were wounded. A woman, identified as Abak Tayaan, was among the fatalities.

Russell Ma-ao, CHR Cordillera director, said teams were sent out as early as Tuesday (June 26) when reports of the standoff in Sitio Malapiat in Barangay San Pascual reached Baguio City.

Rizal Mayor Marcelo de la Cruz said three CHR representatives from Cagayan witnessed the gun battle. The CHR employees arrived while the gunfight was raging.

Conflicting claims

Ma-ao said the witnesses have yet to make an official report on the incident.

The conflict occurred in a property that used to belong to the family of the late Sen. Vicente Madrigal.

Officials of the Department of Agrarian Reform in the Cordillera said the Supreme Court, in a 2003 decision, converted the 2,000-hectare estate into public lands that allowed DAR to parcel it for local farmers.

Ma-ao said the CHR team would try to determine whether De la Cruz was justified in ordering the ejection of settlers from a disputed 200-ha area in the estate.

She said their reports indicated that the estate was still plagued by conflicting property claims.

Although most of the estate had been parceled off through the distribution of free patent awards, certificates of land ownership award and certificates of ancestral land title, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples said ancestral land claimants still contested the lots.

Early warning

The settlers had claimed to represent some of these ancestral land claimants.

De la Cruz said there was no haste in ordering the demolition.

"As early as February, the government alerted the public over the radio not to settle in that area. We also sent out letters to the settlers warning them not to stay there," he told the INQUIRER.

The Rizal town government had demolished houses there before, but settlers returned, he said.

De la Cruz said he anticipated that the Monday demolition would trigger violence, which explained the need for armed security escorts.

The mayor said he has yet to receive a complaint of human rights violations following the incident.

But Chief Supt. Raul Gonzales, Cordillera police director, said he wanted an independent assessment of the tragedy "before other interest groups start riding on the issue again."

Police accountability

The police investigation will determine whether the Kalinga policemen responded to the attack "by the book."

Police said they were forced to burn at least 30 houses to build up smoke to shield them and the demolition team from their attackers.

The armed residents hid in foxholes dug around the community, said Gonzales. The residents, he said, were later forced to retreat to their houses where they continued firing at policemen and soldiers.

De la Cruz said Tayaan was the only woman who the local government was able to account for after the fighting, although some police reports indicated that more women were involved.

De la Cruz said Tayaan was found dead inside one of the foxholes. He said a gun was found near her body. *Vincent Cabreza and Desiree Caluza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

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Republic of the Philippines

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS

Manila

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE CONDUCT OF THE JULY 14, 2007 PLEBISCITE TO RATIFY THE CREATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF OMAR OUT OF THE MOTHER MUNICIPALITY OF LUUK, SULU, PURSUANT TO MUSLIM MINDANAO AUTONOMY ACT NO. 194.

ABALOS, Benjamin S.	Chairman
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.	Commissioner
TUASON, Florentino A., Jr.	Commissioner
BRAWNER, Romeo A.	Commissioner
SARMIENTO, Rene V.	Commissioner
FERRER, Nicodemo T.	Commissioner

x-----------------------------x Promulgated: 28 June 2007

RESOLUTION NO. 8209

The Commission on Elections, by virtue of the powers conferred upon it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, the Local Government Code of 1991, Republic Acts No. 6646, 7166, 6734 and 9054, Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act (MMAA) No. 25, and other election laws, **RESOLVED** to promulgate, as it hereby **RESOLVES** to promulgate, the following rules and regulations to govern the plebiscite to ratify the creation of the Municipality of Omar to be taken from the Mother Municipality of Luuk, Sulu, pursuant to MMAA No. 194.

SEC. 1. Supervision and control. – The Commission on Elections shall have direct control and supervision over the conduct of the plebiscite.

SEC. 2. Expenses and election forms and paraphernalia. – The expenses in holding the plebiscite, which shall include the procurement of security papers; the printing of official ballots, plebiscite returns and other forms; the procurement of supplies and paraphernalia; the per diems of the members of the Plebiscite Committees, the overtime compensation of the Municipal Plebiscite Board of Canvassers, and their support staff; other operational and incidental expenses; and the costs of publication of resolutions and information materials, shall be borne by the Municipality of Luuk, Province of Sulu.

For this purpose, the Deputy Executive Director for Operations (ODEDO) shall require the Election Officer (EO) of Luuk, Sulu, to prepare the budgetary requirements of its office; submit the budget for the holding of the plebiscite; and require the proponent to immediately appropriate and remit the necessary amount.

The Committees on Allocation, Printing, Reception and Verification, Packing and Shipping, the Administrative Services Department and the Information Technology Department shall prepare their itemized administrative, operational and technical budgetary needs, which shall be reviewed and consolidated by the ODEDO, which shall submit the same to the Commission *En Banc*.

SEC. 3. Posting of Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act (MMAA) No. 194. – At least ten (10) days prior to the day of the plebiscite, the EO of Luuk, Sulu, shall cause the posting of copies of Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act (MMAA) No. 194, in all the polling places of Luuk, Sulu.

SEC. 4. Information Campaign. – An objective information campaign shall be conducted in the whole Municipality of Luuk, Sulu, to commence on June 26, 2007 up to July 31, 2007. During this period, civic, professional, religious, business, youth and any other similar organizations may hold symposia, public rallies or meetings to enlighten the voters of the Municipality of Luuk, Sulu, on the plebiscite issues, and to campaign for or against the ratification of MMAA No. 194. Constructive discussions and debates shall be encouraged, and the voters assured of the freedom to voice their opinion regarding the issues, advantages or disadvantages thereof.

The EO of Luuk, Sulu, in coordination with the local government officials, mass media, NGOs and religious groups shall convene barangay assemblies or "*pulong-pulongs*" for such constructive discussions and debates.

SEC. 5. Date of plebiscite and voting hours. – The plebiscite shall be held on July 14, 2007 (Monday). The voting shall start at seven o'clock in the morning and end at three o'clock in the afternoon.

SEC. 6. Area of coverage. – The plebiscite shall be held in the whole Municipality of Luuk, Sulu.

SEC. 7. Who may vote. – All qualified voters of Luuk, Sulu, duly registered as of the January 8-12, 2007 hearings of the Election Registration Board (ERB) are entitled to vote in the plebiscite.

The EO of Luuk, Sulu shall prepare the lists of voters for use in the plebiscite in accordance with Section 11 hereof.

SEC. 8. Plebiscite Committee Composition, Compensation; Duties and Functions. – The voting and counting of votes shall be conducted in each polling place by a Plebiscite Committee (Committee) composed of a Chairman, a Poll Clerk and a Third Member who shall all be public school teachers, to be appointed by the Commission through the EO of Luuk, Sulu.

Each member of the Committee shall be entitled to a per diem of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) for services rendered on the day of the plebiscite.

The Committee shall have the following powers and duties:

(a) Supervise and conduct the voting in the polling place on July 14, 2007;
(b) Count the votes and thereafter prepare the plebiscite returns and other required documents/reports and distribute the same as herein provided;
(c) Furnish watchers certificate of votes upon request;
(d) Return the book/s of voters to the EO, through the principal of the polling centers, and deliver the other plebiscite paraphernalia to their respective custodians for safekeeping not later than July 31, 2007;
(e) Act as deputies of the Commission in the supervision and control of the plebiscite in the polling places wherein they are assigned to ensure the holding of free, orderly, honest, peaceful and credible plebiscite;
(f) Maintain order within the polling place and its premises, to keep access thereto, open and unobstructed, and to enforce obedience to its lawful orders.

If any person shall refuse to obey lawful orders of the Committee or shall conduct himself in a disorderly manner in its presence or within its hearing thereby interrupting or disturbing its proceedings, the Committee may issue an order in writing directing any peace officer to take such person into custody until the adjournment of the meeting, but such order shall not be executed as to prevent the person so taken into custody from exercising his right to vote. Such order shall be executed by any peace officer to whom it may be delivered, but if none is present, by any other person deputized by the Committee in writing; and

(g) Perform such other functions/duties as may be prescribed by the Commission.

SEC. 9. Disqualifications. – (a) No person shall serve as chairman or member of the Committee if he is related within the fourth civil degree of consanguinity or affinity to any member of the same Committee.

(b) No member of the Committee shall engage, directly or indirectly, in any partisan political activity or take part in the plebiscite, except to discharge his duties as such, and to vote.

SEC. 10. Precincts and polling places. – The precincts established for the May 14, 2007 National and Local Elections shall be the same precincts to be used in the July 14, 2007 plebiscite.

SEC. 11. Precinct Level Computerized Voters List (PCVL) and Election Day Computerized Voters List (EDCVL). – The EO of Luuk, Sulu shall print four (4) copies of PCVL which shall be certified by the Election Registration Board (ERB). The two (2) copies of the PCVL shall be given to the Committees for use on plebiscite day. The other two (2) copies of the PCVL shall be distributed as follows:

(a) One copy for posting at the Office of the Election Officer of Luuk, Sulu; and
(b) One copy for posting at the bulletin board of the Municipal Hall of Luuk, Sulu.

The Information Technology Department shall print two (2) copies of the Election Day Computerized Voters List (EDCVL).

SEC. 12. Distribution of Plebiscite Forms and Supplies. – The Municipal Treasurer shall, in coordination with the EO of Luuk, Sulu, distribute the plebiscite forms and supplies to the Committees. The EO or his/her authorized representatives shall release the Books of Voters and the PCVL to the School Principal concerned who shall in turn release them to the Plebiscite Committees.

SEC. 13. Official ballots. – The official ballots shall be distributed at the ratio of one ballot per voter, and three (3) additional ballots per precinct for use by the members of the committee who may wish to avail of their voting privilege.

The official ballots to be used in the plebiscite shall bear the following heading **"OFFICIAL BALLOT"; "PLEBISCITE"; "JULY 14, 2007"; "MUNICIPALITY OF LUUK, PROVINCE OF SULU"**; and underneath the following instructions: **"Fill out this ballot secretly inside the booth. Do not put any distinctive mark on any part of this ballot."**

The following question shall be provided in the official ballots:

"DO YOU APPROVE OF THE CREATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF OMAR IN THE PROVINCE OF SULU, INTO A DISTINCT AND INDEPENDENT MUNICIPALITY TO INCLUDE THE ISLAND BARANGAY OF CAPUAL AND MAINLAND BARANGAYS OF LAHING-LAHING, ANGILAN, NIANGKAAN, HOWIT-HOWIT, ANDALAN, TANGKUAN AND SUCUBAN ALL IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF LUUK, PROVINCE OF SULU, PURSUANT TO MUSLIM MINDANAO AUTONOMY ACT NO. 194?"

SEC. 14. Preliminaries to the Counting of Votes. – (a) The Committee shall clear the table of all unnecessary writing paraphernalia.

(b) The Committee shall open the ballot box, take out the ballots from the compartment for valid ballots and, without unfolding or exposing their contents, examine them using the following guidelines:

1. **Ballots folded together** – The Committee shall ascertain that each fold consists of a single ballot.

   If in the course of the examination, ballots are found folded together before they were deposited in the ballot box, they shall be placed in an envelope for excess ballots.

2. Excess ballots – The Committee shall count the ballots and compare the number of ballots with the number of voters who actually voted.

   If there are more ballots than the number of voters who actually voted, follow the procedures provided for in Sec. 15 (b) hereof.

3. Ballots with detachable coupons – in case ballots with their detachable coupon are found in the box, the coupon shall be detached and deposited in the compartment for spoiled ballots, and the ballots shall be included in the pile of valid ballots.

4. Ballots with the word "spoiled" – If ballots with the word "spoiled" should be found, they shall be placed in the compartment for spoiled ballots.

   The ballots deposited in the compartment for spoiled ballots shall be presumed to be spoiled ballots, whether or not they contain such notation; but if the Committee should find that during the voting any valid ballot was erroneously deposited in this compartment, or if any ballot separated as excess or marked had been erroneously deposited therein, the Committee shall open said compartment after the voting and before the counting of votes for the sole purpose of drawing out the ballots erroneously deposited therein. It shall then prepare and sign a statement of such fact and lock the box with its three keys immediately thereafter. The valid ballots so withdrawn shall be mixed with the other valid ballots, and the excess or marked ballots shall be placed in their proper envelopes which shall for such purposes be opened and again labeled, sealed, signed and kept as hereinafter provided.

(c) Excess and spoiled ballot shall not be read in the counting of votes.

(d) The Poll Clerk shall take hold of the plebiscite returns and the third member shall tack the tally board on the blackboard or any available space within the plain view of the Committee, watchers and the public.

SEC. 15. Manner of Counting of Votes. – The counting of votes shall be public without interruption or delay until completed and shall proceed as follows:

a. The Committee shall open the ballot box, take out the ballots and without unfolding them or exposing their contents except so far as to ascertain that each ballot is single, compare the number of ballots in the ballot box with the number of voters who actually voted as recorded in the Minutes of Voting and Counting.

b. If there are more ballots found than there are voters who actually voted, all the ballots shall be returned inside the box and thoroughly mixed therein. The Poll Clerk, without seeing the ballots and with his back to the ballot box, shall publicly draw out as many ballots as may be equal to the excess, and without unfolding them, place them in an envelope which shall be marked "excess ballots," and shall be sealed and signed by the Committee.

   If there are no excess or the excess has been taken out, the Committee shall form separate piles of 100 ballots each which shall be held together by rubber band.

c. The Chairman shall take the ballots of the first pile and read the ballots one by one, while the Poll Clerk and Third Member shall simultaneously record on the plebiscite returns and tally board, respectively, each vote as it read by the Chairman.

   Each vote shall be recorded by a vertical line (tara), except every fifth vote, which shall be recorded by a diagonal line crossing the previous four vertical lines.

   After finishing the first pile, the Committee shall count the tallies for the Affirmative and Negative votes and record the sub-totals in the column immediately after the last *tara* recorded in the plebiscite returns and tally board, respectively.

   The Poll Clerk and the Third Member shall compare the tallies reflected in the election returns and tally board.

   In case of discrepancy, a recount shall be made. The ballots shall again be grouped together as before the reading.

d. Thereafter, the same procedures shall be followed with the second and subsequent piles of ballots.

e. After all the ballots for the precinct have been counted, the Committee shall:

   1. Sum up the sub-totals of recorded Affirmative and Negative Votes and enter the grand total in words and in figures in the plebiscite returns and tally board;
   2. See to it that the entries in the first copy of the plebiscite returns are clearly impressed and reflected properly in the other two (2) copies;
   3. Sign and affix their thumb marks on the certification portion printed at the bottom of the plebiscite returns and tally board; and
   4. Place the counted ballots in an envelope provided for the purpose, close the envelope with a serially numbered paper seal, sign and deposite the same in the compartment for valid ballots. The accomplished tally board, certified by the Committee, shall also be deposited in the compartment for valid ballots

SECTION 16. Appreciation of Ballots. – The provisions of Sec. 211 of the Omnibus Election Code whenever applicable, shall govern the appreciation of ballots. Any question on the appreciation of ballots shall be decided by a majority vote of the Committee.

No watcher or any other person inside the polling place shall be allowed to participate in the appreciation of ballots. However, any watcher may file a protest, which shall be recorded in the Minutes.

SEC. 17. Plebiscite Returns and Distribution of Copies Thereof. – Plebiscite returns shall be prepared in three (3) copies. All the members of the Committee shall sign the certification printed at the bottom of the plebiscite returns and affix their respective thumb marks on the space provided.

Upon completion of the plebiscite returns, each copy shall be placed in separate envelope provided for the purpose, and be immediately distributed under proper receipt, as follows:

(1) The first copy, to the Municipal Plebiscite Board of Canvassers;
(2) The second copy, to the Election Records and Statistics Department of the Commission in Manila; and
(3) The third copy shall be deposited inside the ballot box.

SEC. 18. Announcement of Results. – Upon completion of the plebiscite returns, the chairman shall orally and publicly announce the total number of Affirmative and Negative Votes cast and counted in the precinct.

SEC. 19. Alterations and Corrections of Plebiscite Returns. – Any correction or alteration made in the plebiscite returns by the Committee before the announcement of the results of the plebiscite in the polling place shall be duly initialed by all the members thereof.

After the announcement of the results of the plebiscite, the Committee shall not make any alteration or amendment in any of the copies of the returns, unless authorized by the Commission.

SEC. 20. Certificates of Votes. – Before leaving the precinct, the Committee shall issue a Certificate of Votes to the watchers upon the latter's request.

SEC. 21. Delivery of the Ballot Boxes, and Other Supplies and Documents, Preservation of Voting Records, Ballot Boxes and their Keys, and their Disposition. – The provisions of Section 217, 218 and 219 of the Omnibus Election Code on delivery of ballot boxes, keys and election supplies and documents, preservation of the voting records and ballot boxes, and their keys and disposition of their contents shall apply to the plebiscite governed by this Resolution.

SEC. 22. Plebiscite Board of Canvassers. – There shall be one Municipal Plebiscite Board of Canvassers (the MPBC) which shall canvass the plebiscite returns submitted by the Plebiscite Committees. The MPBC shall be composed of the incumbent Municipal Election Officer or a lawyer of the Commission, as Chairman, and as members, the Municipal Treasurer and DepEd District Supervisor thereat, subject to Section 25 hereof.

At least five (5) days before the day of the plebiscite, the chairman shall issue a written notice to the other members of the MPBC, that it shall convene at four o'clock in the afternoon of July 14, 2007 to canvass the plebiscite returns. Notice of said convening shall be posted in conspicuous places in the Municipal Hall and other public places in Luuk, Sulu. The MPBC shall meet at the Municipal Hall not later than four o'clock in the afternoon of plebiscite day and shall immediately canvass the plebiscite returns and shall not adjourn until the canvass is completed.

SEC. 23. Supervision and Control over Board. – The Commission shall have direct control of and supervision over the MPBC and may *motu proprio* relieve at any time any member thereof for cause and may substitute him in accordance with Sec. 26 hereof.

SEC. 24. Absence of a Regular Member. – In case of absence of a regular member, the members present shall first verify whether or not the notice stating the date, time and place of canvassing has been duly served on the absent regular member.

In the absence of such notice, one shall be immediately sent to the absent member. If the latter cannot be located, or his whereabouts are unknown, he shall then be substituted. These facts shall be recorded in the respective minutes of the MPBC. As soon as the absent member appears, the substitute member shall relinquish his seat to the regular member.

SEC. 25. Incapacitated Regular Member. – In case of sickness or serious injury of the regular member, a sworn medical certificate shall be required attesting to the incapacity of said member. Upon submission of the medical certificate, a substitute shall be appointed. Said certificate shall be recorded in the Minutes of the MPBC.

SEC. 26. Substitution of Chairman and Members. – In case of non-availability, absence, disqualification due to relationship, or incapacity for any cause of the chairman, the Commission shall appoint a lawyer of the Commission as substitute. With respect to the other members of the MPBC, the Commission shall appoint as substitute the following in the order named: Municipal Administrator, the Municipal Assessor, the Clerk of Court nominated by the Executive Judge of the Municipal Trial Court, and other available appointive Municipal official.

SEC. 27. Prohibition Against Leaving Official Station. – During the period beginning July 14, 2007 until the completion of the canvass, no member or substitute member of the MPBC shall be transferred, assigned or detailed outside of his official station nor shall he leave his station without prior authority of the Commission.

SEC. 28. Quorum. – A majority of the members of the MPBC shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A majority vote of all the members thereof shall be necessary to render a decision.

SEC. 29. Watchers: Rights and Duties. – The proponents and oppositors, registered political parties or coalition of political parties, the citizen's arm of the Commission, if any, and other accredited groups or organization may appoint watchers during the voting, counting and canvassing. A person who is not a registered voter of the municipality, of questionable reputation, or who has been convicted of an election offense or any other crime shall not be appointed as watcher. Barangay officials, including barangay tanods, are disqualified to serve as watchers.

The watchers shall have the right to:

(a) Be present at, and take note of all the proceedings;
(b) Read the plebiscite returns without touching them; and
(c) File a protest against any irregularity noted in the plebiscite returns or in the proceedings of the MPBC, and obtain the resolution thereon in writing.

The watcher shall not be allowed to participate in the deliberation of the MPBC.

SEC. 30. Right to be Present and to Counsel. – Proponents or oppositors have the right to be present and to counsel during the canvass of the Plebiscite returns. Only one counsel shall argue for the proponent or oppositor. In case there are several counsels for the proponents or oppositors, they shall agree among themselves who will argue for them.

SEC. 31. Internal Canvassing Procedures. – The MPBC shall canvass the plebiscite returns in the following manner:

a. The Chairman of the MPBC shall list sequentially all precincts in the Plebiscite Statement of Votes by Precinct (SOVP) by precinct and ensure that every precinct in the project of precincts is listed therein. The MPBC Chairman shall produce before the members, the ballot boxes containing plebisicte returns;

b. Before opening a ballot box, the MPBC shall record the conditions and serial numbers of the ballot boxes and the self-locking serially numbered fixed length seals;

c. The chairman of the MPBC shall then open the ballot box, retrieve the envelopes containing plebiscite returns and record in its Plebiscite Minutes of Canvass, the condition and serial number of the envelopes and their paper seals;

d. The chairman of the MPBC shall open the envelope one at a time, record the condition and serial number of the plebiscite returns and its paper seal, and forthwith open the same for canvassing.

   Only such number of envelopes containing plebiscite returns that can be canvassed during the meeting of the board shall be opened, which number shall be recorded in the Plebiscite Minutes of Canvass.

   Entries in the SOVP shall be made every time a plebiscite return is canvassed. Once all the columns of the SOVP are filled up, the members of the MPBC shall sum up the number of precincts canvassed, the number of registered voters, the number of voters who actually voted, and the total Affirmative and Negative votes therein, and thereafter affix their signatures above their names appearing at the certification portion of the form;

e. In case its copy of a plebiscite returns is missing, the MPBC shall, obtain such missing returns from the Plebiscite Committee concerned. If said returns have been lost or detroyed, the MPBC, upon prior authority of the Commission may use any of the authentic copies of said returns or a certified copy thereof issued by the Commission. Forthwith, the MPBC shall refer the case for investigation to the Regional Election Director (RED) concerned who shall report his findings to the Commission; and

f. Each time the MPBC suspends its meetings or adjourns for the purpose of awaiting for the other plebiscite returns, it shall:

   1. Determine the totals of all Affirmative and Negative votes canvassed;
   2. Accomplish the SOVP and close the same with the initials of the members following the last entry of Affirmative and Negative votes;
   3. Place the SOVP in an envelope, which shall be sealed with a serially numbered paper seal and signed by the members in the presence of all the members of the board and the watchers; and
   4. Place the plebiscite returns already canvassed, the remaining unopened envelopes, and envelope containing a copy of the SOVP inside a ballot box which shall be locked with three padlocks and a self-locking serially number fixed length seal, the serial number of which shall be duly recorded in the Minutes of Canvass.

      Each member of the MPBC shall keep a key to the three padlocks of a ballot box, so that it cannot be opened without all of them being present. The ballot box shall be deposited in a secured room for safekeeping until the resumption of its meeting.

   5. At the resumption of the canvass, the secretary of the MPBC shall:

      a. Get the ballot box from the secured room and verify the condition of the ballot box, the three padlocks and the self-locking serially numbered fixed length seal;
      b. Enter in the Minutes a description of the condition thereof, as well as the serial number of the self-locking serially numbered fixed length seals;
      c. Destroy the self-locking serially numbered fixed length seals in the presence of the other members of the board and watchers; and
      d. Present to the MPBC the remaining unopened envelopes containing plebiscite returns and the official SOVP contained in a duly sealed and signed envelope.

   6. After all the plebiscite returns assigned to it have been canvassed, the MPBC shall;

      a. Prepare a tally of the total Affirmative and Negative votes including the data on the number of registered voters, number of voters who actually voted, and the total number of precincts it has canvassed. Such tally should be publicly accessible to ensure transparency; and
      b. Place the plebiscite returns copy for the MPBC in their respective envelopes and deposit the same inside the ballot box which shall be locked with three padlocks and sealed with a self-locking serially numbered fixed lengths seals; and

   7. Each member of the MPBC shall keep a key corresponding to the three padlocks of the ballot box.

SEC. 32. Minutes of the Canvass of the MPBC. – The MPBC shall prepare three (3) copies of the Minutes of the Canvass.

The first copy shall be forwarded by the Secretary of the MPBC to the Law Department of the Commission within ten (10) days from termination of the canvass. The second copy shall be deposited inside the ballot box. The third copy shall be forwarded to the Office of the Deputy Executive Director for Operations.

SEC. 33. Completion of the Canvass. – The MPBC shall sign the certification and affix their thumbmarks at the bottom of each SOVP, and, using a separate SOVP, consolidate the data including the total Affirmative and Negative votes. Thereafter, it shall prepare a Certificate of Canvass and Proclamation (COCP) which shall contain the following data:

1. Number of precincts canvassed;
2. Number of registered voters;
3. Number of voters who actually voted;
4. Number of Affirmative/Negative votes; and
5. Whether or not the Affirmative or Negative votes constitute majority of the votes cast.

The COCP shall be supported by an SOVP. The members of the MPBC shall print their full names and affix their signatures and thumbmarks in the proper space at the bottom of both forms and certify under oath that the entries therein are true and correct.

SEC. 34. Distribution of the COCP. – The COCP shall be prepared in four (4) copies, supported by a Statement of Votes per Precinct, and distributed as follows:

(1) The original shall, within three (3) days from proclamation, be sent to the Election Records and Statistics Department of the Commission;
(2) The second copy shall be filed in the Office of the Election Officer of Luuk, Sulu;
(3) The third copy shall be forwarded to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government; and
(4) The fourth copy shall be submitted to the Municipal Mayor of Luuk, Sulu.

SEC. 35. Applicability of the Omnibus Election Code and Other Election Laws. – The pertinent provisions of the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Acts No. 6646, 7160, 7166, 9054, 6734 and Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act No. 25 and other election laws and resolutions of the Commission which are not inconsistent herewith shall, as far as practicable, apply to the plebiscite subject of this Resolution.

SEC. 36. Implementation. – The Deputy Executive Director for Operations, assisted by the Directors of the Election and Barangay Affairs Department, Finance Services Department, and Administrative Services Department, shall implement this Resolution to ensure the holding of a free, orderly, honest, peaceful and credible plebiscite.

The Deputy Executive Director for Operations assisted by the Regional Election Director of ARMM and the Provincial Election Supervisor of Sulu, shall supervise the conduct of the plebiscite. They shall regularly submit report to Office of the Executive Director and the Deputy Executive Director for Operations on the status/development of the on-going plebiscite activities.

SEC. 37. Dissemination. – The Education and Information Department shall cause the immediate publication of this Resolution in one (1) daily newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines, and one (1) newspaper with local circulation in the Municipality of Luuk, Sulu, and give it the widest publication and dissemination possible.

The Deputy Executive Director for Operations shall furnish the Regional Election Director of the ARMM, the Provincial Election Supervisor of Sulu, the Election Officer of Luuk, Sulu, the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government, the Secretary of the Department of Education; and the Municipal Mayor, Municipal Treasurer and the DepEd Supervisor of Luuk, Sulu, with a copy of this Resolution.

The Election Officer of Luuk, Sulu shall give this Resolution the widest dissemination in his/her municipality.

SEC. 38. Effectivity. – This Resolution shall take effect upon its publication.

SO ORDERED.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS
Chairman

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

ROMEO A. BRAWNER
Commissioner

RENE V. SARMIENTO
Commissioner

NICODEMO T. FERRER
Commissioner

(PDI–June 30, 2007)

INQUIRER Visayas
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Sagay sea-scapades

By Hazel P. Villa
Sagay City

DAWN BREAKS EVER SO FAINTLY IN the Carbin Reef as the swath of midnight-blue sky turns dark orange with the sun's early rays finally breaking through.

From a distance, two fishing boats bob up and down as their occupants do some early morning line fishing in the waters around the reef's almost ethereal, creamy white, tongue-shaped sandbar.

My companions and I were warned about sleeping in the "lighthouse," actually a concrete box-like watchtower without walls of the Sagay Marine Reserve in the middle of nowhere. Instead of drowning in water, we might drown in the strong sea breeze while we slept.

As expected, only the Bantay Dagat (Guardians of the Sea), who were used to the whooshing of the winds, were able to sleep. We creatures of comfort had eye bags the following morning—but this was a small price to pay for two days and a night of discovering Sagay City, an emerging ecotourism destination in northern Negros Occidental.

After checking out the sights and sounds of this component city, 84 kilometers north of Bacolod City or about an hour-and-a-half drive away, we found that the Sagay Marine Reserve and the islands and reefs around it are its best tourism assets.

Breakfast in garden

Before going off to the reserve, we had breakfast at the meticulously landscaped Sagay City Garden and Living Tree Museum, which has a fusion of flowering plants, shrubs and palms.

A major project of the Sagay Ladies Circle and the city government, the garden was uncharacteristic of a supposedly sleepy locale. The Sagay City Garden, which is near the Balay Kauswagan (House of Progress), is a sprawling hotel-cum-convention center. It has its own swimming pool and a lawn large enough for parties and conventions.

Sagay happens to be one of the fastest growing cities in northern Negros Occidental, yet it retains its strong cultural and heritage flavors with the annual Sinigayan Festival, Produkto Sagaynon Display Center, and the construction of the Museo sang Bata sa Negros—the first hands-on and interactive children's museum outside Manila.

A few meters from the Museo sang Bata is the sail-off point to the much-vaunted Sagay Marine Reserve, cited as 2003's Best Aquatic Resources Management in the Philippines by the Department of Science and Technology and the Philippine Center for Aquatic and Marine Resources Development.

Underwater eye candy

After dropping off our stuff at the Carbin Reef, we proceeded to the Panal Reef for snorkeling. The marine reserve boasts of 60 genera of hard, black and soft corals, and five species of giant clams, some as wide as one meter.

Splashing around and peeking at the underwater wonders of the simpler kind were enough to whet our hunger for a "sea-scapade." It dawned on us that we'd probably need a week of daily gallivanting to check out the 32,000-hectare reserve's rich marine resources it boasts in its brochure.

These resources include more than 250 species of reef and pelagic fishes, four species of marine turtles, five species of the endangered dugong you can find among the ten species of sea grass covering 3,000 hectares, and 78 species of Macro Benthic Algae.

While all that underwater eye candy was awesome, more impressive of a different sort were the swaths of mangroves we passed by on our way to the Molocaboc Island to check out its innumerable decorative shells and huge clay jars used for storing water.

The reserve has 500 hectares planted to 33 species of true mangroves and 10 mangrove associate species. More than 100 hectares are reforested areas.

Such marine wealth could not have been preserved if Sagay's leadership did not stop the wanton destruction in the nick of time.

Conservation efforts

Former mayor and later Rep. Alfredo Marañon, in the late 1970's, initiated the conservation and management of the dying coral reefs with the help of the Silliman University Marine Laboratory headed by Dr. Angel Alcala, former environment secretary.

Marañon's efforts bore fruit in 1995 when some 32,000 hectares of Sagay's territorial waters was declared Protected Seascape under the National Integrated Protected Area System. On April 14, 2001, this same area became the Sagay Marine Reserve through Presidential Proclamation No. 592.

In 1997, the reserve was given the Galing Pook Awards for Top Ten Innovative Programs on Marine Conservation and Protection.

"Political will is the main reason for Sagay's success and when we became a city in 1996, we managed the funds for our many projects focusing on the environment, education and economy," said former mayor Leo Rafael Cueva, who has worked as executive assistant to former mayor and now Gov. Joseph Marañon III.

Predator-turned-protector

At Molocaboc Island, fringed by lush mangroves, white sand and clear waters, 73-year-old Amado Tajanlangit, a retired Bantay Dagat, tells the story of how he became "predator-turned-protector."

"I used to do dynamite fishing myself, using ammonium nitrate fertilizer, and this went on for 20 years. By 1967, we were getting poor catch but we still kept on doing dynamite fishing," said Tajanlangit as he sat under the shade of a tree.

It was only in 1983 when the dynamite fishing stopped as the nearby Carbin Reef was proclaimed fish sanctuary. This was later expanded to include the reefs of Panal, Maca and the fringing reefs of Molocaboc.

"There are so many kinds of fish—all kinds in the sanctuary. At first, the sanctuary affected our livelihood and then we just got used to it. Those of us who used to do dynamite fishing became members of the Bantay Dagat," said Tajanlangit.

With the mangroves and corals growing back and the fish more bountiful, Tajanlangit says they catch the occasional dynamite fishermen from Cebu whose boats are impounded and cases filed against the perpetrators.

Island of jars

Anyone who has a thing for observing typical Philippine island life will find Molocaboc fascinating for the tiny details that its 4,000 residents take for granted.

It is surprising to know that this beautiful island does not have fresh water, and so all around at the backyard of every house, you see huge earthen jars the height of a 10-year-old child.

Far from being a decorative piece or a cultural oddity, the jars are actually rain catchment for drinking water and precious washing—otherwise, residents would have to gather more shells and catch more fish to afford fresh water delivered to the island for P15 per five gallons.

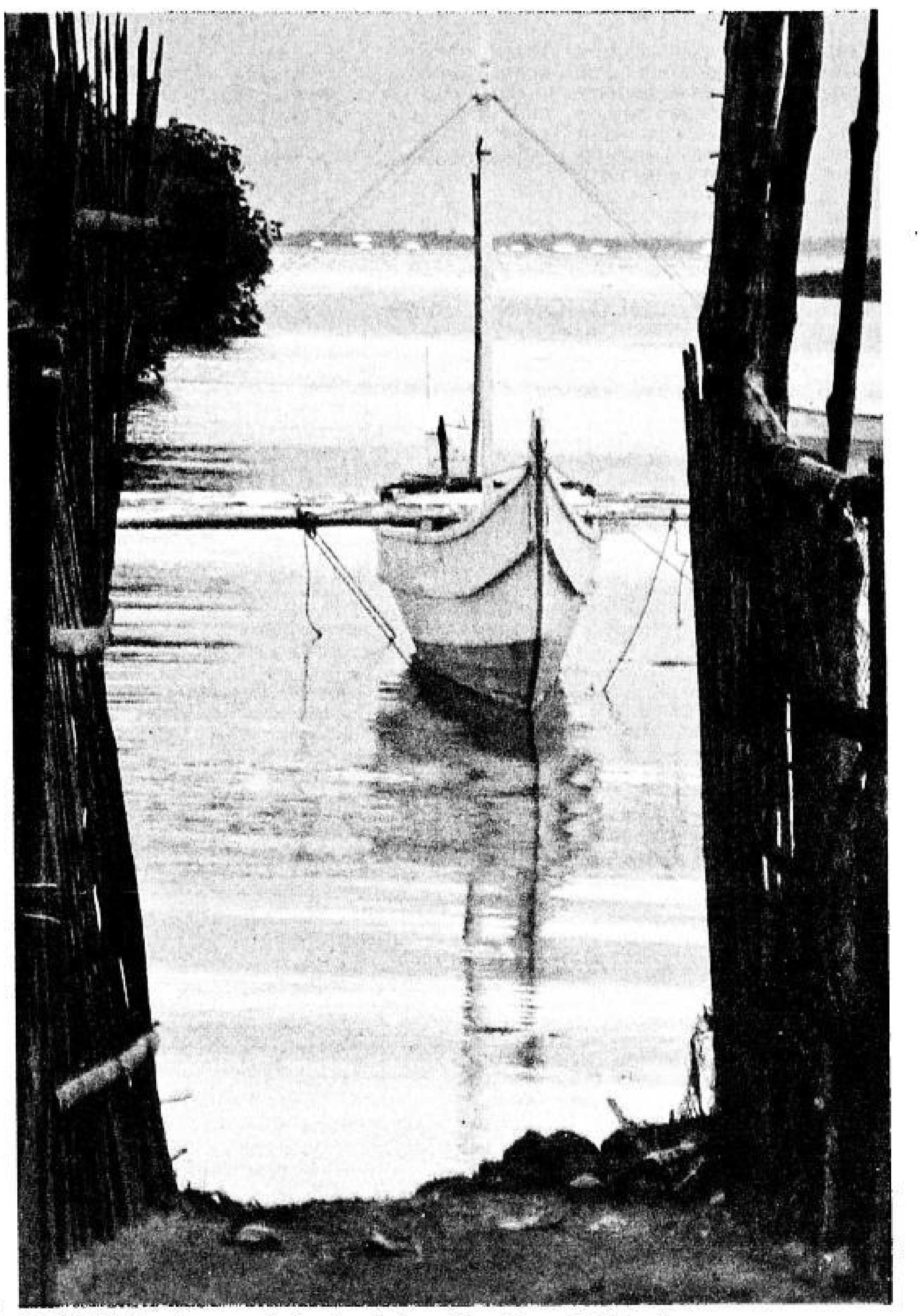
"Despite the water problem, people won't transfer to Sagay because the livelihood here is good," said village councilman Antonio Pasayio, who added that the government was finding a way of bringing them freshwater through underwater pipes.

For example, how about gathering daily 11 varieties of seashells like a child's play and selling these at P48 per kilo? And to think there's an endless supply of shells spread out in 10 hectares in Molocaboc!

If an islander doesn't like her skin turning terra cotta from fishing or shell gathering, she always has the option of staying indoors and boring holes into shells or stringing them to be sold to Cebu's shell craft makers.

For an island hopper, however, it is already adventure enough to be anywhere at the Sagay Marine Reserve and gazing at the seascape, speeding by mangroves, checking out shells, and swimming in undulating blue-green waters.

Molocaboc, Carbin Reef and the other areas of the reserve are a great site for immersions and study tours for anyone who like to get insights on the beauty and conservation of the Visayan Sea.



A TYPICAL island scene at the backyard of most island homes in Molocaboc. HAZEL VILLA/INQUIRER VISAYAS

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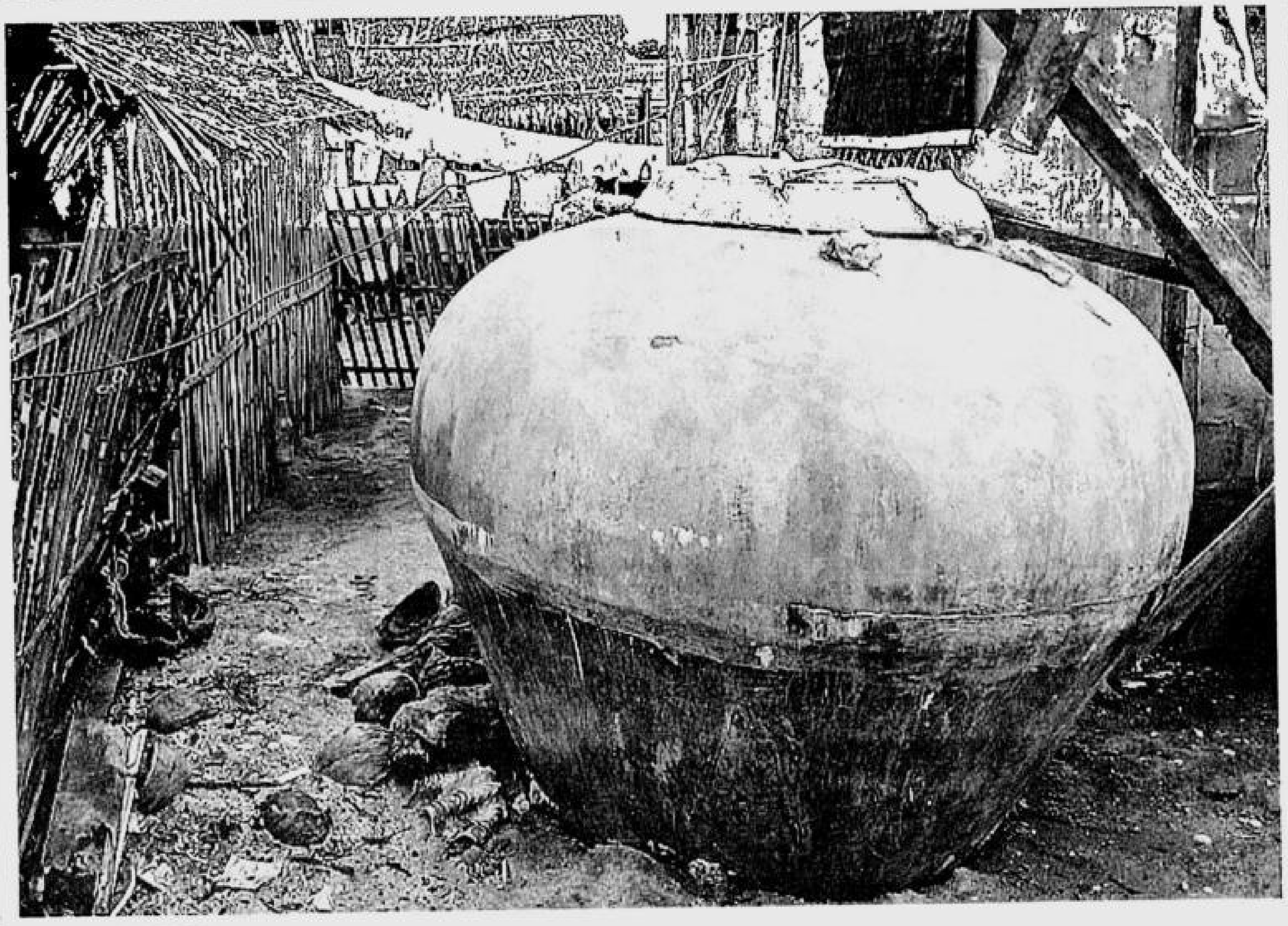

RAIN CATCHER
Households in Molocaboc at the Sagay Marine Reserve keep jars as tall as 10-year-old children as containers for fresh water. The jars are kept outside homes to catch rain water.
HAZEL VILLA/INQUIRER VISAYAS

Townsfolk say no scam in oil spill payments

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—CONTRARY TO ALlegations made by Rep. Janette Garin, residents of Miag-ao town in Iloilo said the filing and payment of compensation claims for damages arising from the Petron oil spill were not marred by irregularities.

Members of the Miag-ao Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (MFARMC) said the claimants "underwent rigid screening" by the office of the municipal agriculturist and submitted sufficient documents and requirements to prove that they were victims of the oil spill.

A total of 523 residents received some P1.7 million from the International Oil Pollution Compensation (IOPC) Fund, an intergovernmental organization which assists oil spill victims.

Garin accused IOPC personnel of "wanton laziness" in verifying the claims and of tolerating "barbaric political gimmickry." She named Miag-ao Mayor Gerardo Flores, outgoing Dumangas Mayor Rolando Distura, and then provincial board member Niel Tupas Jr. as among the politicians who were recommending the claimants.

Garin defeated Flores in the May 14 elections.

Her allegations were contained in an e-mail the lawmaker sent to Hugh Bayley, a member of the United Kingdom House of Commons.

IOPC director Willem Oosterveen had earlier disputed Garin's charges.

In a manifesto passed on June 12, the MFARMC pointed out that the claims were processed before the election period and that Garin was the one who made the compensation process "a political gimmick."

It said Garin's actions "jeopardized the chances for claims of some 2,000 additional victims."

The group asked the lawmaker for a dialogue in the presence of members of the media. Garin said she was willing to talk but stood firm on her allegations.

She maintained that the compensation claims were used for political purposes, from the identification of recipients to the distribution of payments.

Garin said the processing and payments of claimants during the election period went against the agreement reached in a meeting of Iloilo representatives, Petron officials and Presidential Adviser for Western Visayas Rafael Coscolluela with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

They agreed that the payments for Iloilo claimants would be made after the elections to avoid it being influenced by partisan politics, she said.

Only the claimants from Miag-ao and Oton towns received compensation because the other coastal towns in the first district would file theirs after the elections, said Garin.

Maid charged with slaying of German, wife

By Kit Bagaipo
Inquirer Visayas

TAGBILARAN CITY—THE BOhol provincial prosecutor found "sufficient evidence" against a housemaid charged with the murder of a German national and his wife in April.

Provincial Prosecutor Macario Delusa, in his resolution promulgated Thursday, found that housemaid Virginia Saluta "participated principally" in the killing of couple Helmut and Eutiquia Malinka.

However, Delusa noted that the crime was allegedly committed by Saluta with "still unidentified conspirators."

The provincial prosecutor's resolution was based on the complaint for double homicide and robbery filed by the Bohol provincial police against Saluta, the house help of the slain Malinka couple.

The Malinka couple was found murdered in their residence in Barangay Laya, Baclayon town, early morning on April 13.

Lipa bishop wants total stop to Taal spa

LIPA CITY—LIPA Archbishop Ramon Arguelles said on Friday that the spa resort being developed by Korean firm Jung Ang Interventure at the Taal Volcano crater in Talisay, Batangas didn't even undergo proper consultations with communities around it.

Pushing for a complete stop to the project, which he claimed to be illegal and immoral, Arguelles said it would destroy the beauty of Taal Volcano.

"The project is unacceptable because of the damage it will do to ecological balance," he said.

Arguelles presented before mediamen the copy of a certification issued by Provincial Secretary Benjamin Nepales attesting that "no ordinance pertaining to any development and reclassification of land located at Taal Volcano Island was received by his office as required by the Local Government Code."

Signed last Friday, the certification also said that no ordinance has been discussed in the provincial board.

Neither was there any meeting called for a public hearing on the project, said Nepales.

The provincial board also did not review any municipal ordinance approving the development and reclassification of the Taal Volcano Island, he added.

"There is no legal basis that may allow any development and/or reclassification in the area," said the provincial secretary.

Talisay Mayor Florencio Manimtim said the spa was being built on a six-hectare crater area that a local landowner sold to Korean investor Jung Ang. *Marlon Alexander Luistro, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

IAEB No. 2007-018 - Civil

FACE-LIFTING OF SSS BACOLOD BRANCH OFFICE
located at 2nd St. corner Lacson St., Bacolod City
(Re-publication)

FACE-LIFTING OF EXISTING BUILDING, THE WORKS INVOLVE CLEANING AND REPAINTING OF EXTERIOR WALLS, CLEANING AND REPLACEMENT OF PANEL WINDOWS, AND OTHER RELATED WORKS TO COMPLETE THE PROJECT

1. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM, through the 2007 Approved Budget for Maintenance/Repair Building – Repairs and Renovations intends to apply the sum of One Million Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (P1,200,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for Face-lifting Project of SSS Owned Building. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs) from potential bidders to apply for eligibility for *the FACE-LIFTING OF SSS BACOLOD BRANCH OFFICE.* Bidders should possess a valid PCAB license applicable to the above type and cost of the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC, and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Documents. Interested Bidders must submit their LOIs for the above-mentioned projects on or before July 13, 2007, up to 5:00 p.m. at the *Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat, 6th floor, SSS Main Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City with telephone nos. 922-2991 & 924-7380 OR at the Local BAC Secretariat, 2nd Floor, SSS Building, Lacson St., Bacolod City* with telephone nos. (034) 709-0415 local 220 & (034) 434-5130 (fax no.) and secure therefrom Part I of the Bidding Documents consisting of the Eligibility Requirements. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated in a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for the submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents on July 23, 2007, 2:30 p.m. *at the Green Room, 12th floor, SSS Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City OR at the Conference Room, 2nd Floor, SSS Building, Lacson St., Bacolod City.* Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Documents.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted unless otherwise stated to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR-A of R.A 9184, only Bids from eligible Bidders will be opened. In accordance with IRR-A of R.A 9184 a contract will only be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.
4. Interested Bidders shall submit their accomplished Eligibility Documents at the Green Room, 12th floor, SSS Main Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City OR at the Conference Room, 2nd Floor, SSS Bldg., Bacolod City, on July 23, 2007, 2:30 p.m. Any Eligibility Documents submitted after this deadline shall be declared "Late" and shall not be accepted by the Bids and Awards Committee. The documents required in the Eligibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the Instruction to Bidders.
5. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
6. Part II of the Bidding Documents may be purchased by the Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,500.00. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative on or before July 31, 2007, 8.00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
7. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on August 06, 2007, at 2:00 p.m., Conference Room, 2nd Floor, SSS Building, Lacson St., Bacolod City.
8. Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the Conference Room, 2nd Floor, SSS Building, Lacson St., Bacolod City on August 20, 2007 not later than 2:00 p.m. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in a form and amount indicated in the Bid Tender Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be conducted on August 20, 2007 at 2:00 p.m., Conference Room, 2nd Floor, SSS Building, Lacson St., Bacolod City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the said address.
9. Completion of the works is required by 60 calendar days from receipt of Job Order (JO) issued by SSS, BAC or from receipt of Notice to Proceed issued by the SSS Bacolod City, whichever comes first.
10. The *SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM* reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Bids without offering any reason, waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the SSS. The SSS neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the SSS guarantee that an award will be made.

Bids and Awards Committee
The Secretariat
6th Floor, SSS Main Building
East Avenue, Diliman,Quezon City
Tel # 922-2991,924-7380, 920-6401 local 5491
Email – bac@sss.gov.ph
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THE CHAIRMAN
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(PDI–June 30, 2007)

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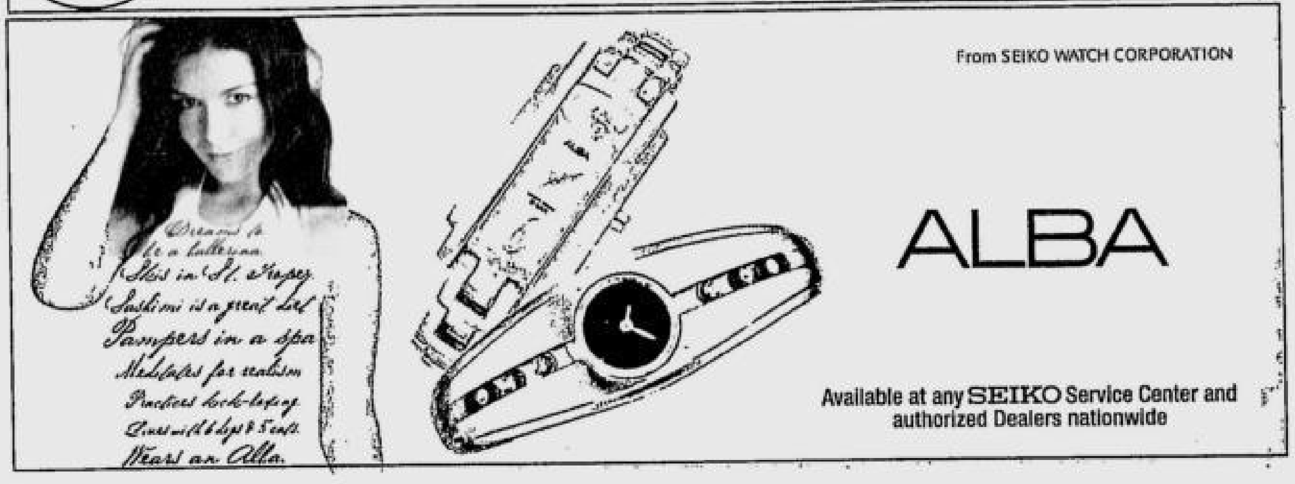

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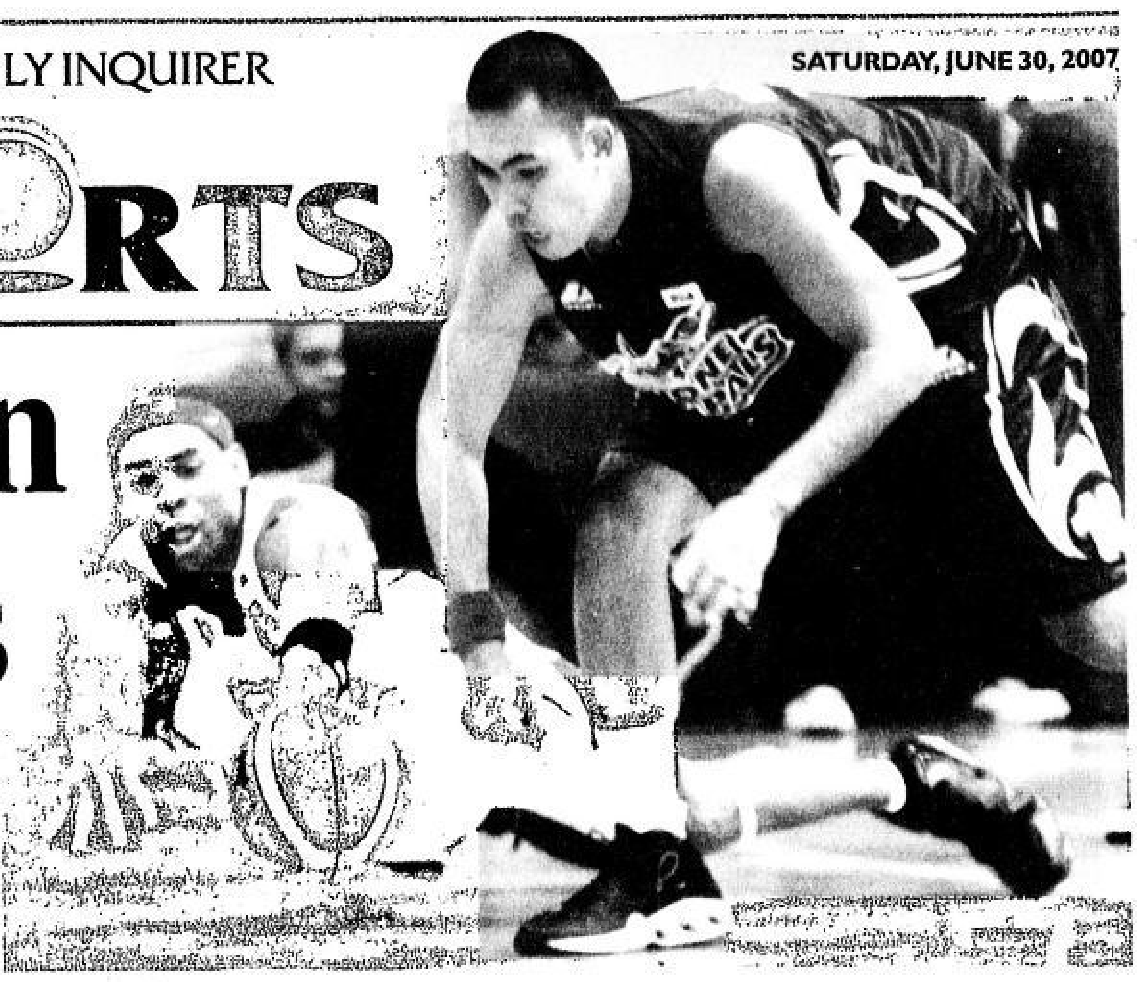
LateSPORTS

Phone Pals a win from title series

SMB conjures do-or-die magic, keeps bid alive



RED BULL import James Penny dives for the loose ball against Talk 'N Text center Yancy de Ocampo. RYAN LIM

GAMES TOMORROW (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:05 p.m.—Alaska vs. San Miguel Beer (if necessary)
6:35 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs. Red Bull

By Musong R. Castillo

HOBBLED WITH A SLIGHT left ankle sprain and all, JJ Sullinger did what he was supposed to do last night as Talk 'N Text moved on the verge of the PBA Fiesta Cup title series.

"It's my job—I can't have a night off, I can't be sick and I can't be injured," Sullinger said after shooting 10 points in the final two minutes that lifted Talk 'N Text to a 112-111 victory over Red Bull at the Cuneta Astrodome.

"I really do not want to consider myself as an import. I'd like to be treated as one of the guys," he said. "But in games like this one, it's my job to rescue the team."

Talk 'N Text, which now has a 3-2 lead in the best-of-seven semifinal series, actually blew a 13-point lead in the third quarter and had to erase a six-point deficit in the final four minutes.

In the second game, San Miguel Beer used a big second quarter to crush Alaska, 126-108, to stay alive in their half of the semifinal bracket.

With the win, which kept San Miguel alive despite still trailing Alaska at 3-2, the Beermen have now won five do-or-die matches this conference dating back to the elimination round.

Sullinger scored eight straight points from the 2:06 mark, hitting a triple that shoved the Phone Pals ahead to stay, 108-106, before hitting two free throws with 6.3 left that made it 112-108.

The scores:

First Game

TALK 'N TEXT 112—Cardona 30, Sullinger 19, Washington 19, Allado 12, Belano 12, Carey 9, Billones 6, De Ocampo 3, Fran 2.

RED BULL 111—Penny 31, Baguio 18, Hrabak 17, Cruz 10, Najorda 9, Fonacier 7, Alvarez 5, Valenzuela 5, Sharma 4, Bugia 2, Robinson 2, Ybanez 1.

Quarters: 25-30, 59-53, 85-77, 112-111

Second Game

SAN MIGUEL 126—Young 18, Ildefonso 16, Pena 16, Cablay 14, Gonzales 13, Wilson 11, Villanueva 9, Racela 8, Calaguio 8, Tenorio 7, Adriano 6, Espinas 0

ALASKA 108—Cariaso 21, Miller 19, Ellis 13, Cortez 12, Hugnatan 10, Bajar 8, Laure 6, Ferriols 6, Juinio 4, Singson 3, Belasco 3, Thoss 2, Aban 1

Quarters: 29-23, 56-40, 90-69, 126-108

Duncil leaves UST for PBA

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE CHAMPION TEAM'S BEST PLAYER JUST bid goodbye to the UAAP.

Jojo Duncil, the key figure in the 2006 UAAP title run of the University of Santo Tomas, has decided to join the rookie draft of the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) in August.

The Tigers had initially listed Duncil in their 15-man lineup this season, but UST coach Pido Jarencio said he "will not stand in the way of [Duncil's] progress."

Jarencio stressed that the move had nothing to do with suspicions on the eligibility status of the 2006 Finals Most Valuable Player.

"It is his and his family's decision," said Jarencio.

A previous report in the INQUIRER Libre cited certain documents that showed Duncil had just turned 25 years old, making him ineligible to compete this season. Duncil maintained that he only turned 24 this year.

Last season, Duncil almost single-handedly carried the Tigers in the extra period of the do-or-die title showdown against the Ateneo Blue Eagles. The Tigers went on to stun the heavily favored Eagles, 2-1, in the championship series.

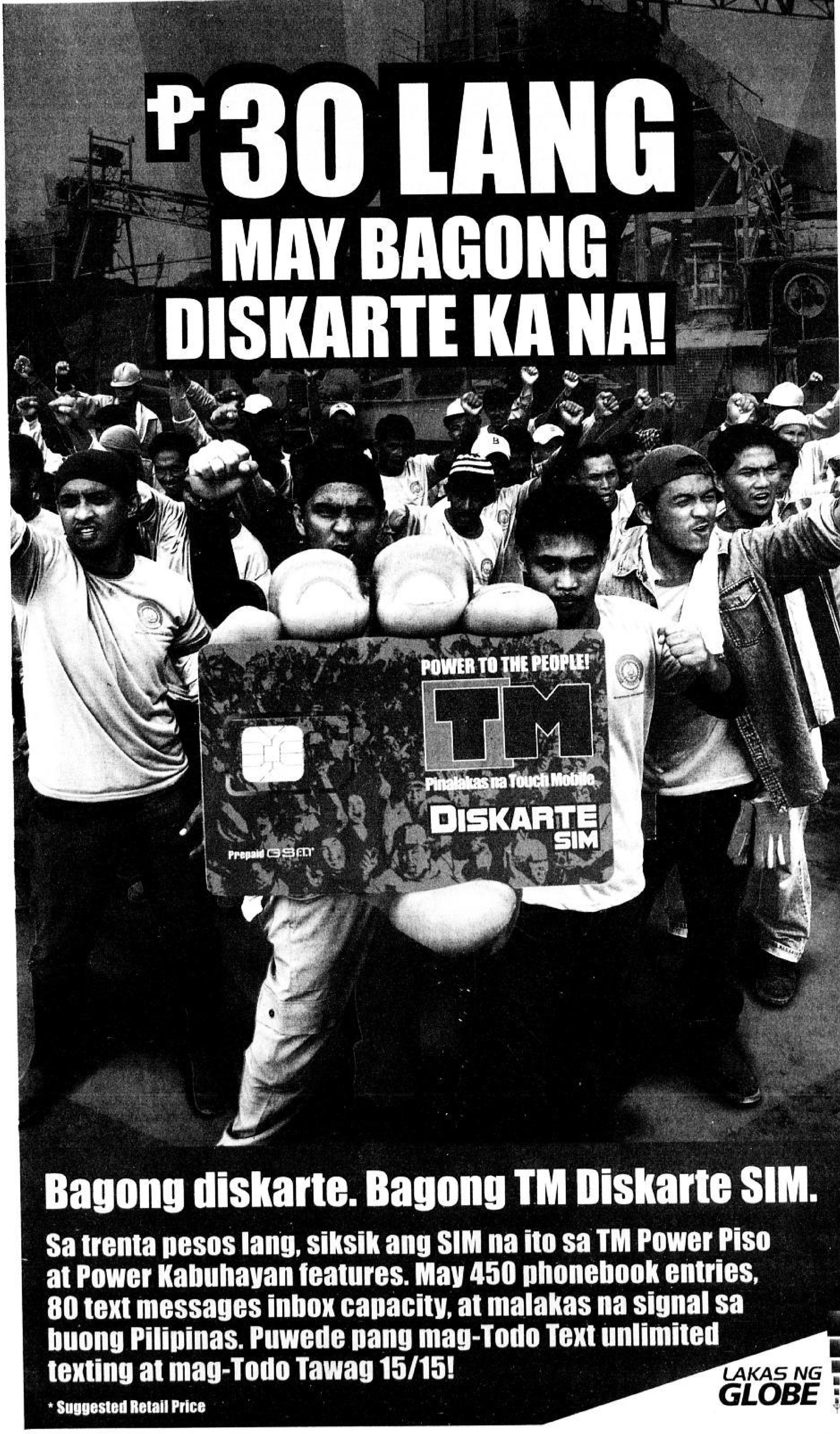
The PBA draft is set on the second week of August, a month after the UAAP men's basketball competition kicks off on July 7.

Still, the coaches of the eight schools believe that this season remains a wide-open race.

"The competition is leveled; all teams are well balanced," said La Salle coach Franz Pumaren.

University of the East coach Dindo Pumaren, rookie mentors Glenn Capacio of Far Eastern and Bogs Adornado of Adamson, assistants Sandy Arespacochaga of Ateneo and National U's Jeff Napa shared similar assessments.

"It will depend on which team matures better during the tournament," said Dindo Pumaren.



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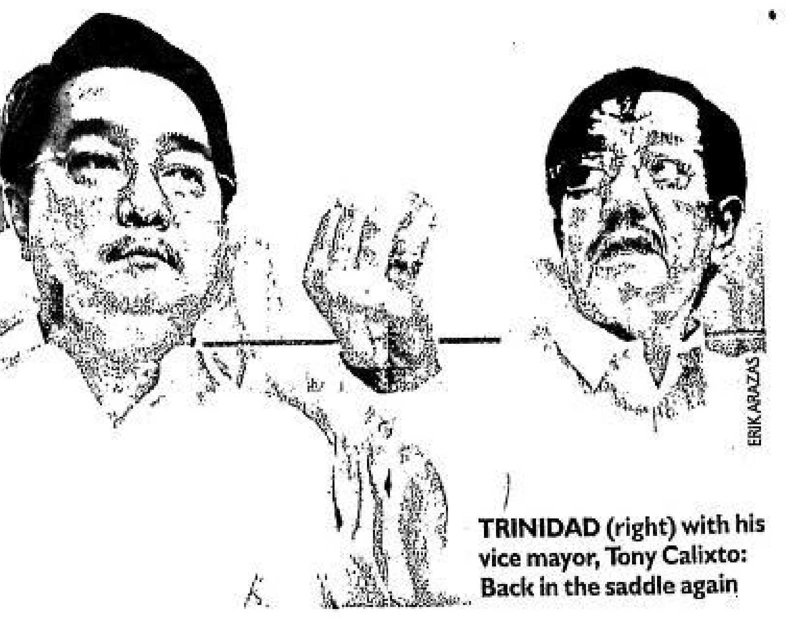

TRINIDAD (right) with his vice mayor, Tony Calixto: Back in the saddle again

'Peewee can assume post'

CA: Election in Pasay makes dismissal 'moot, academic'

By Julie M. Aurelio

REELECTED PASAY CITY MAYOR WENCESLAO Trinidad can assume his post on Monday.

The Court of Appeals on Thursday ruled that Trinidad's reelection on May 14 rendered a previous dismissal order "moot and academic," leaving the mayor with no more administrative liability.

In an 11-page decision penned by Associate Justice Ricardo Rosario of the 13th division, the court said Trinidad was now free of administrative liability in relation to the alleged anomalous garbage contract the city entered into in 2005.

Trinidad was elated by the CA's decision, as it meant he could resume his post Monday without worrying that he could be removed because of his past cases.

The CA said the electorate voted the mayor back into office "with full knowledge of his life and character, including his past misconduct. Then such reelection is considered a condonation of his past misdeeds."

But the court added that although Trinidad was no longer liable administratively for alleged past misdeeds, his reelection did not guarantee he could not be charged criminally for the same case.

The order also covers Vice Mayor Antonino Calixto and Councilors Ricardo Advincula and Lexter Ibay, who separately filed petitions for review after they were dismissed in January.

"We find that the reelection of the petitioners in the May 2007 elections during the pendency of their petitions for their review obliterates their administrative liability, and warrants the dismissal of their petitions for being moot and academic," Rosario said in his decision.

Trinidad, Calixto and most incumbent members of the city council were reelected in the recent elections.

Trinidad was put on a six-month preventive suspension and later dismissed after the Office of the Ombudsman found him guilty of grave misconduct for an alleged anomalous garbage contract in 2005.

The complaint, filed by Councilors Generoso and Antonia Cuneta, alleged that Trinidad extended the contract in "consideration of a monthly allowance" and without a public bidding.

In its decision, the CA said the dismissal order against Trinidad had not been decided with finality when he ran for reelection.

"Petitioners continue to be subject to prosecution for any violation of the Anti-Graft and Practices Act. The reelection of a public official extinguishes only the administrative but not the criminal liability he incurred during his previous term of office," Rosario said in the decision.

The court dismissed the four Pasay officials' consolidated petitions for review for being moot and academic. Their motions for the issuance of injunctive relief for their dismissal were denied.

"The ultimate quality of justice for an elective official is that rendered by the electorate," Trinidad told the INQUIRER. "Their voice is heard by everyone and cannot be reversed unless by the people themselves."

The reelected mayor is expected to lead the flag-raising ceremony at City Hall on Monday. Outgoing Mayor Allan Panaligan will hand over City Hall to Trinidad on the same day.

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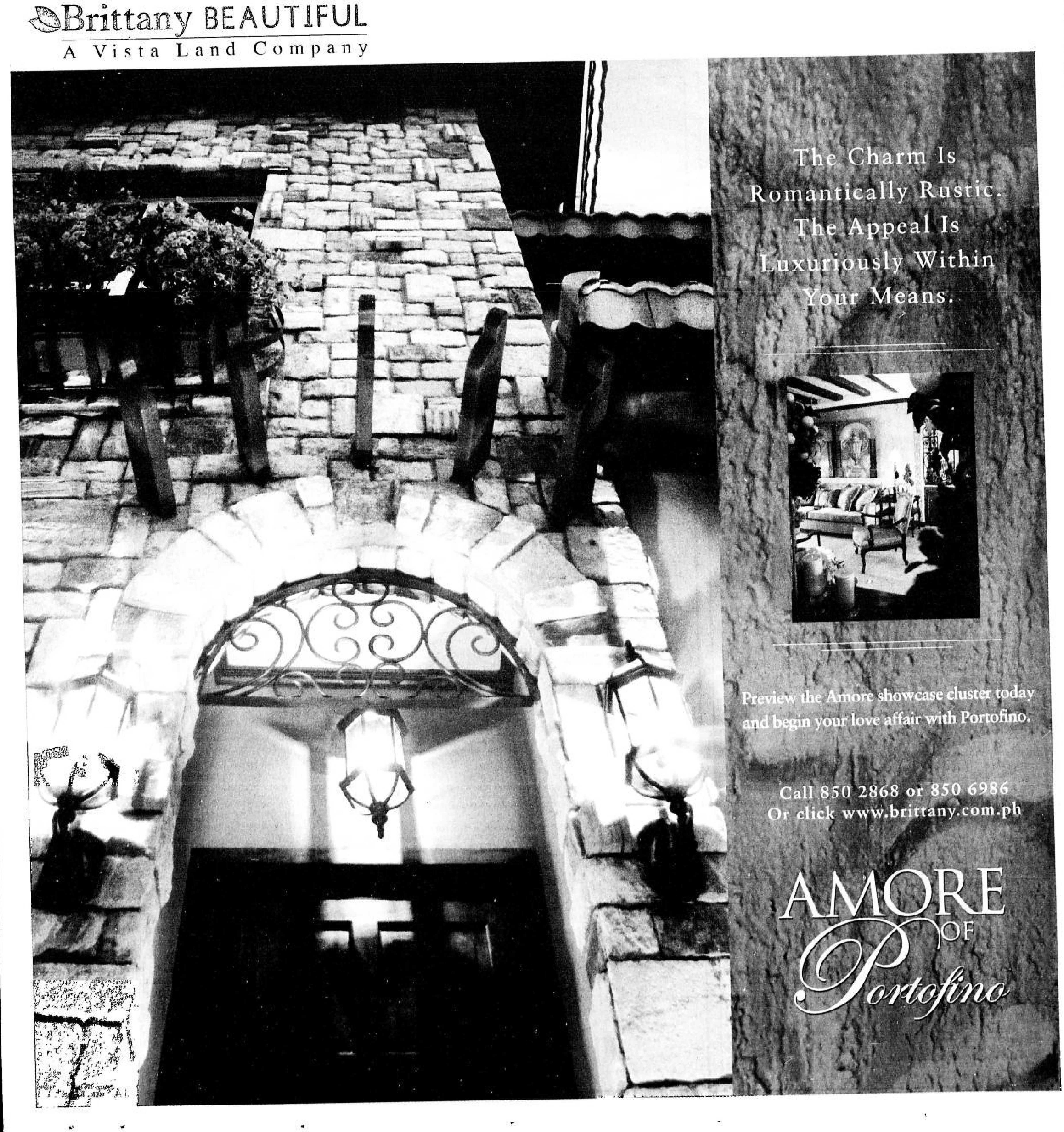
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Lim to reopen Rizal Avenue after taking oath as mayor

By Allison W. Lopez

MAYOR-ELECT ALFREDO LIM will reopen a portion of Rizal Avenue to motorists right after he takes his oath before Supreme Court Justice Reynato Puno as the top official of the Manila government at noon today at the Bonifacio Shrine.

Rafaelito Garayblas, secretary to the mayor, said Lim would personally oversee the removal of pedestrian lanes at a portion of Rizal Avenue in Sta. Cruz.

The avenue's closure in 2003, through a city council resolution, reportedly resulted in increased vehicular traffic, but jeepney drivers and business establishments reported losses in income.

Garayblas said Lim, who he claimed was the first Manila mayor to stage a comeback, chose Bonifacio Shrine as site for his oath-taking because of its historical relevance (the shrine is named after hero Andres Bonifacio). He was also responsible for building the shrine.

Today's guests include Vice President Noli de Castro, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, representing his father, former President Joseph Estrada, who was allowed by the Sandiganbayan to attend only the oath-taking of his son JV Ejercito as mayor of San Juan City.

Eraño Manalo of the Iglesia ni Cristo and Bro. Mike Velarde of El Shaddai, whose groups supported Lim, were also invited, as well as outgoing Vice Mayor Danilo Lacuna and former Rep. Rodolfo Bacani, who both ran for mayor. Outgoing Manila Mayor Lito Atienza is also on the guest list.

The program will begin at 11 a.m. with a concelebrated Mass by Rev. Msgr. Josefino Ramirez; Rev. Fr. Isidro Abano, O.P. and Rev. Fr. Erick Santos.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA No. 185 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Yusniar Meylani Munir	Education Innovation Assistant
YOUNG GALAXY RESIDENCE INN & RESTAURANT INC. 558 Gen. Malvar St., Malate, Manila	Sam Soon Kim (w/o JUNG)	Marketing Manager
NEW GEN KIMS FAMILY CORPORATION 5059 P. Burgos St. cor. San Marcos St., Poblacion, Makati City	Meihua Gao	Operation Staff 2
TEEBONE GOLF (PHILS.), INC. Penthouse, 105 RCI Bldg., Rada St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Robert Henry Larsen	President
PARSONS BRINCKERHOFF PHILS., INC. 19/F OMM-Citra Bldg., 39 San Miguel Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	See Sheng Sim	Manager
CANTINETTA INCORPORATED G/F Karrivin Plaza, 2316 Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City	Rainero Bentini	Restaurant Manager
CMODULE INC. 1415 MH del Pilar St., Ermita, Manila	Geoffrey Sim	President
PHILHOTEL.COM CORPORATION LG-01 Makati Palace Hotel, P. Burgos St., Makati City	Eunkyeong Kim	Hotel Ticket Reservation Manager
TNKC (MANILA) CORPORATION 16/F Marc 2000 Tower, 1973 Taft Ave., Malate, Manila	Yoshihiro Hamane	General Manager-Fleet 1
MALABON CONTAINER CORPORATION 82 Pineapple Rd., Potrero, Malabon City	Youquan Zhu	Plant Manager
PHILIPPINE HOTELIERS, INC. Dusit Hotel Nikko, Ayala Center, 1223 Makati City	Aiko Haruna	Guest Relations Manager
KS MYUNGSUNG INT'L. CORP. 633 Remedios St., Malate, Manila	Su Mi Kim	General Manager
EDU INFORMATION CENTER "AUSTRALIA" CORP. 5/F Executive Bldg., Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City	Jeong Hoon Ha	Managing Director
MOUNTAIN PEAK CASTLE TRADING CORP. 2468 Pasong Tirad, Makati City	Jumhwa Kim (w/o JUNG)	General Manager
TOP NETWORX SOLUTIONS, INC. Suite 3D-2 Vernida I Condominium, 120 Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Tomoo Matsuno	Vice President
DIGITAL X ZONE, INC. Polaris Center, 48 Polaris St., Poblacion, Makati City	Man Hee Chung (wife of HAN)	Manager
TROPICAL FOCUS PHILS., INC. Energizer Comp., Mayflower St., Edsa Central, Mandaluyong City	Lawrence Ross Todd	Director of Administrative Services
DAFFODIL COMPUTER INCORPORATED C. Jose St., cor. Apelo Cruz St., Malibay, Pasay City	S.M. Modasser	General Manager
OFFICETIGER PHILIPPINES CORPORATION 7/F East Gate Center, 169 EDSA Highway Hills., Mandaluyong City	Blake Bunyard Johnson	Assistant Vice President-Real Estate Due Diligence
SUMITOMO CONSTRUCTION CO., LTD. 2/F Pioneer House Bldg., Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Nobuhiko Maruni	Construction Manager

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

The DOLE conducts free seminar on Labor-Human Relations and Productivity. For more information, please call 339-2013 & 303-5920.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI–June 30, 2007)

Robbers' targets: Areas near SLEx, NLEx

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE MAKATI AND QUEZON City business districts are vulnerable to bank robberies because they are near Metro Manila exits—the expressways.

"Quezon City, for example, is near the North Luzon Expressway (NLEx), which makes it easier for bank robbers to escape," said Supt. Rommel Miranda of the National Capital Region Police Office.

Added the NCRPO spokesperson: "Makati City is near the South Luzon Expressway, the exit to the Southern Tagalog region."

A robbery gang held up a branch of the Philippine Savings Bank in Cainta, Rizal early this week.

This month, robbers struck three times in southern Manila. They attempted to rob two banks in Makati City in just one day. The week before, armed men tried to seize an armored van in Parañaque City.

Police reported four suspects were killed in the Makati bank robbery attempts, while three others were injured. The heist in Parañaque City left four security guards dead and six others wounded. In May, bank robbers struck in Fairview, Quezon City.

Director General Oscar Calderon, chief of the Philippine National Police, ordered earlier the formation of tracker groups. "The tracker teams will get the profile of the criminal group and find out how it operates," said Miranda. "Then it will try to predict the next possible target."

"Director (Reynaldo) Varilla has also given orders to improve security measures in banks and other vital installations," Miranda added.

6-month suspension for Pepe Pimentel

By Volt Contreras

FORMER GAME SHOW HOST and now barangay chair Jose "Pepe" Pimentel was given a six-month suspension order by the Ombudsman yesterday for displaying "ill-conduct and violence" in a dispute with fellow villagers over a street gate project in 2003. Pimentel, best known as the veteran emcee of the "Kwarta O Kahon" show, was earlier sued for attempted homicide in connection with the incident that allegedly left a laborer injured.

The complaint was later dismissed by the Quezon City prosecutor's office for lack of evidence.

Almost four years after the incident, however, the Ombudsman cited Pimentel for "conduct grossly prejudicial to the best interest of the service" and ordered him suspended for six months and one day as chair of Barangay Laging Handa in Quezon City.

The agency acted on the complaint filed by United Neighbors of Laging Handa (UNLH) led by its president Luis Sta. Cruz Tiu.

Group seeks closure of Rodriguez landfill

By Margaux C. Ortiz and Kristine Alave

AN ENVIRONMENT GROUP IS seeking the permanent closure of the landfill in Rodriguez, Rizal.

Joey Papa, president of Bangon Kalikasan Movement, said they were planning to file the petition in the Supreme Court.

He said volunteer lawyer Javier Flores was gathering documents to support the petition.

If it is granted, government agencies like the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Interior and Local Government and the National Solid Waste Commission are expected to implement the order.

"The waste-to-energy issue is disguising the fact that the landfill is still a dump," said Papa.

Reacting to the group's plan, Rodriguez Mayor Pedro Cuerpo said the methane gas project would not only provide clean and renewable energy but also give local government millions of pesos in tax revenues.

Papa noted that the high tribunal earlier ordered the closure of a dump by the Manila Bay.

"We would use this previous case in arguing for our petition," Papa told the INQUIRER.

He said the Eco-Waste Coalition led by Dr. Pastor Cruz of the Montalban Environment Protection and Development Council filed last year a citizens' suit with the Office of the Ombudsman against Cuerpo.

Papa said Republic Act No. 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, specified that garbage should be segregated, composted, and recycled.

"Dumping mixed wastes in glorified dumps such as the landfill in Rodriguez is actually against the law," he said.

Cuerpo said he was not surprised by the group's opposition, and even expected it.

But despite the group's warnings of adverse effects on the people's health and the environment, the project will push through.

Cuerpo said his town expects to earn P20 million in annual tax revenues from the project. Right now, the methane gas from the landfill was not collected, he added. Environmentalists should be glad that there was a project to trap the gas and use it for power, the mayor said.

Cuerpo said that just like Bangon, he believes the landfill could be turned into a mini-forest. But before going into that, the methane gas should be taken out first, he said.

The mayor assured the public and environmentalists that they had environmental permits for the P1.5 billion project.

TransCo
Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Service Contract for the Route, Parcellary Survey, Relocation and Subdivision Survey of Aurora – Polanco 138 kV Transmission Line Project
Ref. No. PB070525-PP0080

1. The ***National Transmission Corporation (TransCo)***, through the *CY2007 Corporate Budget* intends to apply the sum of Php7,400,000.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for **Service Contract for the Route, Parcellary Survey, Relocation and Subdivision Survey of Aurora – Polanco 138 kV Transmission Line Project / *PR No. ESD-07-000046027.*** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening of the financial proposals

2. The *TransCo* now calls for the submission of ***Letters of Intent (LOIs)*** from potential bidders to apply for eligibility and short listings for ***Service Contract for the Route, Parcellary Survey, Relocation and Subdivision Survey of Aurora – Polanco 138 kV Transmission Line Project.*** Interested consultants must submit their LOIs on or before ***July 12, 2007, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the address below*** and secure the Eligibility Documents therefrom by paying the nonrefundable fee of Php500.00. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass fail" basis. The last day for the submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents: ***July 13, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.*** at the address below. Only those that are short listed will be entitled to submit bids.

3. The BAC shall draw up the short list of consultants from those who have submitted ***LOIs*** and have been determined as eligible both in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A). The criteria and rating system for short listing are:

   (a) Applicable Experience of the Firm – 40 Points
   (b) Qualification of Personnel to be Assigned to the Job – 35 Points
   (c) Current Workload Relative to Capacity and Equipment Capability – 25 Points

   Note: The bidder who shall meet the minimum score of 70 points shall be included in the short list, provided that the bidder's meets the required minimum requirments in any of the above criteria. Bidder/s who fail to meet the minimum requirements in any of the above criteria will get a zero (0) point on the said criteria and said bidder shall be automatically disqualified.

4. ***LOIs*** must be delivered by hand, through mail, or facsimile to the address below from ***8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.*** on or before ***July 12, 2007.***

5. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR-A of R.A. 9184, only bids from short listed consultants will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 the contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.

   The PROCURING ENTITY shall evaluate bids using the ***Quality-Cost Based Evaluation/Selection (QCBE/QCBS)*** procedure. The PROCURING ENTITY *shall indicate the weights to be allocated for the Technical and Financial Proposals.* The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders.

6. Interested consultants may obtain further information from TransCo at the address given below from ***8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.***

7. The contract shall be completed within the following schedules:

   Contract shall commence the work under this contract immediately from the date of receipt by the Contractor of the duly approved Purchase Order (PO).

   Route Survey

   a) ***All the requirements for the 1st submission, such as the Plan and Profile Drawings including the Route Map shall be completed and submitted within Ninety (90) calendar days reckoned from the 1st day of the contract period.***

   b) ***All the requirements for the 2nd submission, such as the Topographic Maps and Tabulated Coordinates of Tower Sites shall be completed and submitted within One Hundred Fifty (150) calendar days reckoned from the 1st day of the contract period.***

   Parcellary Survey

   a) ***All the requirements for the 3rd submission, such as the advance copies of the Individual Lot Sketch Plans of all the lots with towersites, Initial Master List and Parcellary Index Map shall be completed and submitted within Two Hundred Ten (210) calendar days reckoned from the 1st day of the contract period.***

   b) ***All the requirements for the 4th submission, such as Final Copies of all of the Individual Lot Sketch Plans, Final Parcellary Index Map and Final Masterlist and Researched Lot Data shall be completed and submitted within Two Hundred Seventy (270) calendar days reckoned from the 1st day of the contract period.***

8. *TransCo* reserves the right to accept or reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

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(Sgd.) **RAUL JOSEPH G. SELUDO**
BAC Chairman

(PDI – June 30, 2007)

Good sports also needed in politics

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

A FILIPINO DIPLOMAT WAS ALlegedly caught on camera shoplifting at a duty free store inside a US military base in South Korea.

The items reportedly involved a music player and a bottle of Gucci perfume.

The US Forces commander in Korea has reportedly banned all Filipino diplomats from the PX (post exchange) shopping center because of the incident.

If the story is true, the diplomat could be the second Filipino to be caught on camera shoplifting in a US military commissary.

Two years ago, an Army lieutenant who had just graduated from the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), was sent back from a study grant in the United States after he left the store with a CD.

To people in some countries where there are Overseas Filipino Workers, the word "Filipino" means one of two things. One is "domestic," the other "thief."

Now, can you still blame Chief Justice Reynato Puno for saying recently that it is shameful to be called a Filipino?

* * *

Behind every man's success or failure is a woman.

Once again, the saying has become true in the case of a bureau director who is on his way out.

The director's Delilah (or Imelda) is a woman doctor who dictates to him which suppliers get the contracts for the bureau.

So smitten is the chief with the doctor that he can't say no to her even if the contracts are onerous for the bureau.

Because of her, he is about to lose his job.

* * *

An official working at the Tagaytay City Mayor's office allegedly threatened to harm with an office chair a 74-year-old man as well as a female real estate broker at the Office of the City Tax Assessor, Gregorio Monreal.

Their crime? They were trying to pay taxes on a titled property in the name of Joseph Chen, the 74-year-old man.

A criminal case in the Sandiganbayan has been initiated against an official who refused to accept taxes on registered lands even when these are duly titled.

There is reportedly a land grabbing syndicate in Tagaytay City headed by a certain well-known politician.

The techniques used involve falsification, intimidation, guns and goons.

* * *

The Commission on Elections should let Team Unity candidate Migz Zubiri sit as senator while Genuine Opposition's Koko Pimentel pursues an election protest.

If the protest is found to have a basis later on, then Zubiri can be removed and Koko can take over from him.

But on no account should Zubiri be prevented from sitting as senator of the Republic.

Zubiri won fair and square over Pimentel in Maguindanao.

Koko can't say that Zubiri won by a "hometown decision" because both of them are from Mindanao.

Bukidnon's Zubiri was chosen by fellow Mindanaoans over his rival from Cagayan de Oro.

METROBRIEFS

Illegal drugs suspect faces charges

ALFREDO Cajeda, the suspected member of the illegal drug network in Pasig City who traded shots with the police during Thursday's raid at the Mapayapa compound in the city, is facing charges of illegal possession of firearms, possession of illegal drugs, and direct assault, according to Chief Supt. Luizon Ticman, Eastern Police District director. The compound in Barangay Sto. Tomas is the site of a former drug den and laboratory that was also the object of a raid last year. The 2,000 square-meter compound is said to be the center of a P900-million drug network allegedly headed by Amin Imam Boratong who is now in police custody. The raid resulted in the arrest of over 300 people. Sr. Supt. Frank Uyami, Pasig City police chief, alleged that Cajeda worked as a courier for the Boratong network. Ticman described Cajeda to be one of the group's contact persons and a ranking member of the syndicate.

Kristine L. Alave

Asce-Philippines induction

FORMER President Fidel Ramos will be the guest of honor and inducting officer at the American Society of Civil Engineers-Philippines International Group's general assembly and induction of officers and trustees on July 2 at the Manila Hotel. Ramos, an Asce honorary international fellow, will induct the officers and trustees and speak before the general membership. The Asce-Philippines International Group is composed of Filipino and expatriate Asce members from the consultancy and constructor sectors, the government and some international lending institutions. To be inducted are Dr. Armando Cazzola, president; Dr. Rafael Apostol, immediate past president and ex-oficio trustee; Dr. Ernesto de Castro, secretary; Bonifacio Manuel, treasurer; John Keefe, press relations officer (international); Ramon Hugo Lozano, PRO (domestic) and Potenciano Leoncio, executive director.

Faustino; 71

PUBLIC relations consultant Renato "Ato" Faustino, who served under 14 secretaries of the Department of Agriculture died June 25 of respiratory failure from emphysema and asthma complications. He was 71. Ato is survived by wife, Linda, and sons Alex and Andy. His body lies at his residence at No. 9 Ruby Streeet Zone 5, Cainta Green Park. Faustino will be laid to rest on Sunday, July 1, 10 a.m. at the Heaven's Gate Cemetery in Boso-Boso, Antipolo City.

US Senate kills immigration reform bill

WASHINGTON–THE US SENATE DEALT A FATAL blow on Thursday to President George W. Bush's overhaul of immigration policy—an emotional issue that has divided Americans in the run-up to next year's presidential election.

Dashing the hopes of millions of immigrants seeking legal status and exposing a deep lack of support among Bush's own Republicans, the bill fell 14 votes short of the 60 needed in the 100-member Senate to advance toward a final vote.

A crestfallen Bush conceded defeat and said he was moving on to other issues such as balancing the federal budget when it became clear the immigration legislation would not be revived during the final 18 months of his two-term presidency.

"A lot of us worked hard to see if we couldn't find common ground. It didn't work," said Bush, who has seen his approval ratings slump to about 30 percent amid anger over the Iraq war and a generally negative public mood.

The bill tied tough border security and workplace enforcement measures to a plan to legalize an estimated 12 million illegal immigrants, most from Latin America, and to create a temporary worker program sought by business groups.

It also would have created a merit-based system for future immigrants, something conservative Republicans sought.

The bill was the fruit of months of negotiations by a group of Republican and Democratic senators and the White House.

But the president was unable to overcome fierce opposition from fellow Republicans who said it was an amnesty that rewarded illegal immigrants. A majority of Republicans in the House of Representatives also opposed the Senate bill.

Supporters were dismayed and said it was unlikely Congress would tackle comprehensive immigration reform before the presidential election in November 2008.

"No one benefits now," said Rosa Rosales, the national president of the League of United Latin American Citizens. "It's very disappointing."

Analysts say public understanding of the issue was clouded by reports by partisan think tanks and lobbyists as well as by accounts from "advocacy" journalists and talk-show hosts and the free-wheeling exchanges of Internet blogs.

Many opponents said illegal immigrants took jobs from US workers, while employers from Arizona to Texas shot back that thousands of farm, construction and restaurant jobs were going begging through a lack of takers.

Bush has sought to overhaul US immigration laws for years and the bill was seen as his last chance for a major domestic legislative victory before leaving office in January 2009. *Reuters*

Defeat worries employers who rely on immigrants

WHILE THE DEFEAT OF THE SENate immigration bill was a dismaying disappointment to illegal immigrants and the groups that support them, it also created major worries for employers across the country who depend on immigrant workers.

Employers from food-processing industries and agriculture as well as construction contractors and commercial landscapers were among the most persistent forces pushing for passage of the Senate bill, which failed Thursday when senators voted 53-46 not to proceed to a vote. The measure would have provided a path to legal status for millions of illegal immigrants, who make up a significant percentage of workers in many low-wage, labor-intensive industries.

The bill's defeat was hailed Thursday by conservative groups and others who said it would have rewarded law-breaking immigrants and would have wrongly excused the employers who hired them. Now, employers say they face a bleak landscape of intensified raids by the immigration authorities and growing pressure to purge illegal immigrants from their work force, but no new options to bring in temporary foreign workers or help illegal workers become legal.

"It leaves most of our guys in a pretty tough spot," said Brewster Bevis, director of legislative affairs for Associated Builders and Contractors, a national organization of construction businesses. "Most of our members are good actors, they believe the workers they have hired are legal," Bevis said. "But they wanted this reform so they can sleep better at night and don't have to fear potentially being visited by ICE," the federal Immigrations and Customs Enforcement agency.

Meat-packing employers were especially concerned about the defeat of the bill.

"Immigration policy is divorced from enforcement, and the American employer, for one, is caught in the middle," said Jack Shandley, a vice president at Swift & Co., a meat-packing company in Greeley, Colorado. Immigration agents arrested more than 1,282 Swift workers in raids last December that cost the company more than $45 million in lost production and worker replacement costs.

"More people are going into hiding," said Juan Salgado, president of the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, based in Chicago, which works with many illegal immigrants. Salgado said most illegal immigrants have family ties to legal immigrants and American citizens and would not be likely to return to their home countries despite the heightened risk of deportation. *NYT*

CLOUDS surround the Teide volcano on Tenerife, Spain's Canary Islands, on June 28. Teide National Park was declared a World Heritage Site by Unesco on June 28. REUTERS

3 more sites given World Heritage status

WELLINGTON—A ROMAN PALACE IN Serbia, more than 6,000 ancient rock drawings in Azerbaijan and a modernist university campus in Mexico were added to the list of World Heritage cultural sites Friday.

Unesco's World Heritage Committee finalized this year's additions to the coveted World Heritage List at a meeting in the New Zealand city of Christchurch.

The late Roman fortified palace of Galerius or Gamzigrad-Romuliana in the east of Serbia, was commissioned by Emperor Caius Valerius Galerius Maximianus in the late third and early fourth century.

The site includes fortifications, the palace, basilicas, temples, hot baths and a memorial complex.

It offered a unique testimony of the Roman building tradition and was unique in its intertwining of ceremonial and memorial functions, the committee said in a statement.

The Gobustan rock art landscape covers three areas of a plateau of rocky boulders rising out of the semi-desert of central Azerbaijan. It contains some 6,000 outstanding rock engravings bearing testimony to 4,000 years of rock art, the committee said.

The site also featured the remains of settlements and graves, reflecting an intensive human settlement by dwellers who lived in the area up to the Middle Ages during the wet period that followed the last ice age.

Also added to the list was the Central University City Campus of the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (Unam) in Mexico City, built from 1949 to 1952 by more than 60 architects, engineers and artists. *AFP*

US, Burma hold talks in China over Suu Kyi

SUU Kyi in November 2006. AFP

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED States held rare talks with the Burma (also known as Myanmar) military junta in Beijing to press for the release of the Southeast Asian state's democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi, the State Department said Thursday.

At the China-brokered talks this week, US officials were "clear and direct" in demanding the release of the opposition leader and thousands of other political prisoners in Burma, spokesperson Tom Casey said. The junta leaders, however, did not seem to relent, he said.

It was the highest level direct talks between the rival nations in recent years, with the US officials led by deputy US assistant secretary of state Eric John, the top Southeast Asian diplomat in the State Department.

One US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the discussions were "very pointed and very direct." "I don't think we saw anything coming out of them that will indicate, unfortunately, that they have changed their basic opinions," Casey said of the junta leaders who attended the talks—information minister Kyaw Hsan, foreign minister Nyan Win and culture minister Khin Aung Nyint.

"We certainly did not hear that they were planning on releasing Aung San Suu Kyi or other political prisoners," he said.

Burma requested the meeting and Beijing, instead of Yangon, was chosen as the venue because the junta refused to meet a key condition by Washington—allow US officials to first meet with Aung San Suu Kyi, who has spent 11 of the past 18 years under house arrest, Casey said.

"The government of Burma often prefers that we would meet with them in Burma. Our longstanding policy is we will not meet them in Burma—outside of our embassy offices—if they will not allow us to meet with Aung San Suu Kyi," he said.

Burma has been ruled by the military since 1962.

Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) won elections in 1990, but the military did not recognize the result and has kept her locked in her lakeside home, despite fierce international criticism.

Casey said Washington decided to have the talks with the junta to "reinforce the messages they were receiving" from the UN special envoy, Ibrahim Gambari, who had visited Yangon several times to press the military rulers to release Aung San Suu Kyi and bring about national reconciliation. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

US high court strikes racial diversity school programs

WASHINGTON—Students cannot be assigned to public schools because of their race, the US Supreme Court ruled on Thursday in a significant civil rights decision that casts doubt on integration efforts adopted across the country. By a 5-4 vote on the last day of its term, the court's conservative majority struck down voluntary programs adopted in Seattle and Louisville, Kentucky, to attain racial diversity in public school classrooms. The ruling added to a string of decisions this term in which President George W. Bush's two appointees—Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Samuel Alito—have shifted the court sharply to the right on divisive social issues like abortion. It also fueled vows by Democratic presidential candidates to change the court's direction and reduce racial inequality in schools. *Reuters*

Office of pro wrestler Benoit's doctor raided

ATLANTA—Federal drug agents raided the office of pro wrestler Chris Benoit's personal physician in search of records and other items, authorities said Thursday. The raid came as questions have arisen into whether steroids—which some experts say can lead to depression and violent outbursts known as "roid rage"—played a role in what authorities say was Benoit's murder of his wife and 7-year-old son and his subsequent suicide. Earlier Thursday, World Wrestling Entertainment owner Vince McMahon cautioned against jumping to that conclusion, saying it was "all speculation" until toxicology tests are completed. The raid at Dr. Phil Astin's office in Carrollton began Wednesday night and concluded early Thursday, said agent Chuvalo Truesdell, a spokesperson for the Drug Enforcement Administration in Atlanta. The search warrant had been obtained in connection with the Benoit investigation, he said. *AP*

Cats traced to 5 matriarchs

SOME 10,000 YEARS AGO, SOMEWHERE IN the Near East, an audacious wildcat crept into one of the crude villages of early human settlers, the first to domesticate wheat and barley. There she felt safe from her many predators in the region, such as hyenas and larger cats. The rodents that infested the settlers' homes and granaries were sufficient prey. Seeing that she was earning her keep, the settlers tolerated her, and their children greeted her kittens with delight.

At least five females of the wildcat subspecies known as Felis silvestris lybica accomplished this delicate transition from forest to village. And from these five matriarchs all the world's 600 million house cats are descended.

A scientific basis for this scenario has been established by Carlos A. Driscoll of the National Cancer Institute and his colleagues. He spent more than six years collecting species of wildcat from Scotland to Mongolia. He then analyzed the DNA of the wildcats and of many house cats and fancy cats.

Five subspecies of wildcat are distributed across the Old World. They are known as the European wildcat, the Near Eastern wildcat, the Southern African wildcat, the Central Asian wildcat and the Chinese desert cat. Their patterns of DNA fall into five clusters. The DNA of all house cats and fancy cats falls within the Near Eastern wildcat cluster, making clear that this subspecies is their ancestor, Driscoll and his colleagues said in a report published Thursday on the website of the journal Science.

The house cats in the study fell into five lineages, based on analysis of their mitochondrial DNA, a type that is passed down through the female line. Since the oldest archaeological site with a cat burial is about 9,500 years old, the geneticists suggest that the founders of the five lineages lived around this time and were the first cats to be domesticated. *NYT*

Couple arrested in missing British tot scam case

A PICTURE of Madeleine McCann taken May 3. AFP

SAN ROQUE, SPAIN—SPANISH police arrested Thursday an Italian man and a Portuguese woman for allegedly trying to extort money from the parents of missing British 4-year-old Madeleine McCann.

The couple were arrested at San Roque near the southern Spanish port of Algeciras following an investigation launched when police learned they had contacted Madeleine's parents seeking a reward, the interior ministry said.

"The facts point to fraudsters, although the police investigation has not yet run its course," the interior ministry said in a statement.

"Harry Potter" author J.K. Rowling and billionaire Richard Branson are among the celebrities and business leaders who have contributed to a reward fund for information leading to the girl's return that tops $4.9 million.

Madeleine, known as Maddie, disappeared on May 3 from the hotel room where she and her 2-year-old twin siblings were sleeping in the Portuguese resort town of Praia da Luz while her parents were out dining nearby.

Her disappearance has been given widespread news coverage worldwide with her parents heading an international campaign to keep the case in the public eye and locate her.

Portuguese police excluded the possibility that the couple, who they said were aged 61 and 54, had any direct connection to Maddie's disappearance.

They were arrested "for other deeds" and "cannot be held responsible for the disappearance" of Maddie, a police statement said. *AFP*

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bigtime Meals

Meal A
P49

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Meal B
P69

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Meal C
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Meal D
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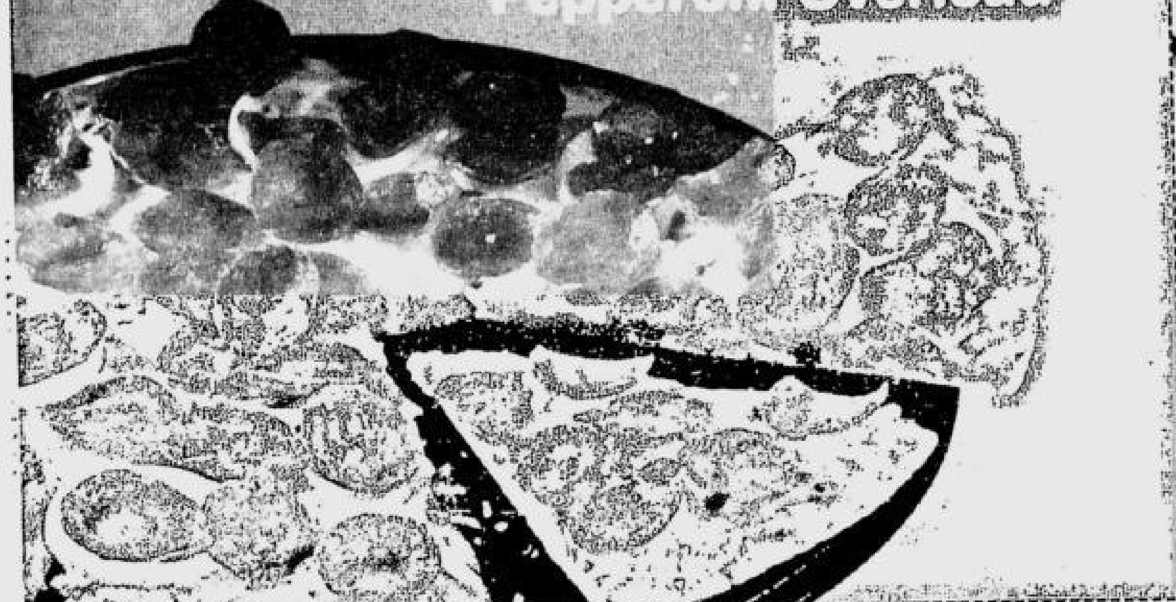

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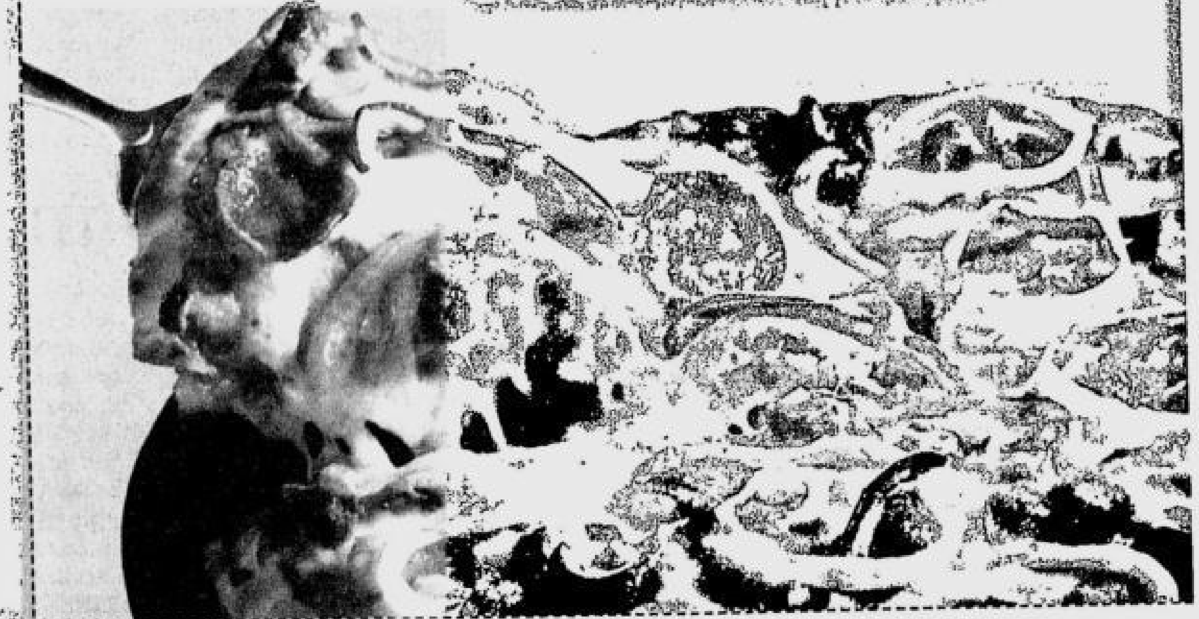

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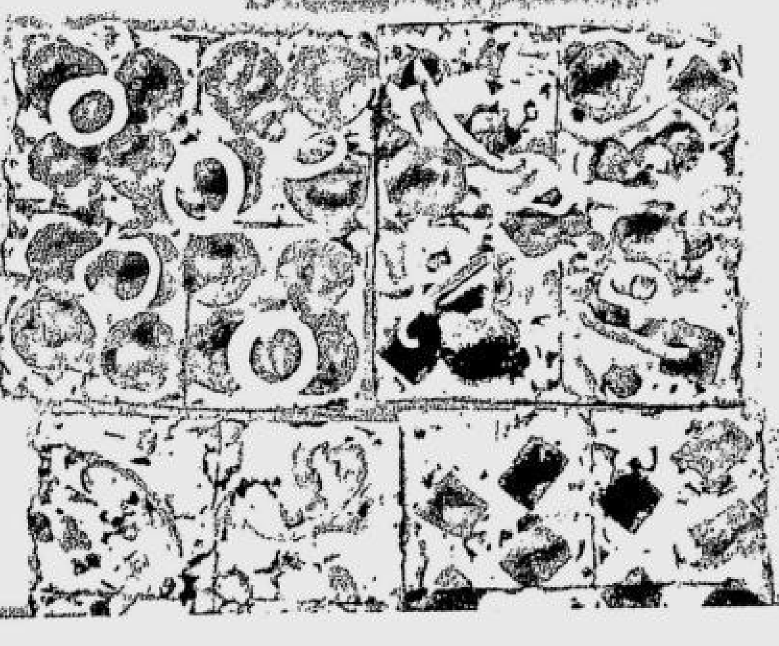

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Miñoza rockets into contention /A28

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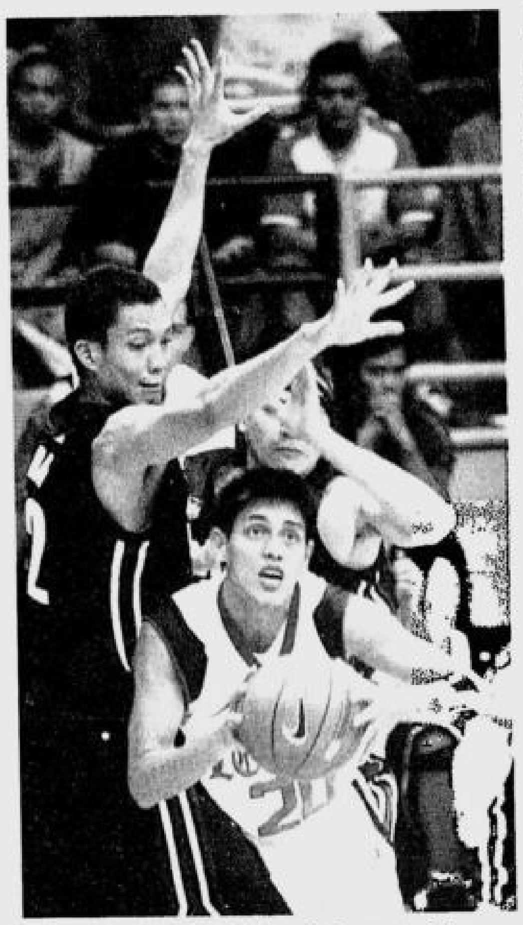
Federer hits 50 on grass /A29

Ekwe ejected but Lions mangle Altas

By Marc Anthony Reyes



RAFAEL Jasul (middle) and the rest of the Knights found a way past Arshimidee David (left), Harvey Porras and the rest of the Blazers on the way to a victory. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

SAM EKWE WAS THROWN OUT AFTER A blatant foul in the third quarter but that did not stop San Beda's defending champion Red Lions from crushing the Perpetual Altas, 86-62, yesterday in the NCAA men's basketball tournament at the Arena in San Juan.

It was the second straight win for the Lions, who were later joined by the Letran Knights for the early lead after Muralla cagers downed the St. Benilde Blazers, 92-81.

The Knights struggled to shake off the Blazers, but got a big lift from Bryan Faundo, who keyed a third-quarter breakaway for the win.

Ekwe, the reigning Rookie-MVP awardee from Lagos, Nigeria, reacted with a kick to the groin of Perpetual's Korean guard Sang Lee, who had sent him flat on the floor as he tried to complete an alley-oop pass with 5:02 left in the third quarter and the Red Lions way ahead at 57-32.

"It's sad, but I can't blame him. *Sinahod eh* (He was undercut)," said San Beda coach Frankie Lim. "Now I wonder how we can play against Mapua without him."

The ejection meant a one-game suspension for the 6-foot-8 Ekwe that he will serve when San Beda takes on Mapua on Wednesday.

Worse, it disqualifies Ekwe from any post-season awards like the Most Valuable Player accolade according to NCAA management committee chair Paul Supan of Jose Rizal.

The Altas, who slumped to their second straight defeat, couldn't do much despite Ekwe's absence except to engage the Red Lions in a highly physical game.

Ogie Menor also sustained a deep cut on his forehead after a collision with Mike Kong that required eight stitches, according to Lim.

Lim later said he's not concerned by the physical game against them and said they are "a tough team and prepared for everything."

"We just have to be smarter and not react like Sam did, though I don't blame him," Lim said.

The scores:

First Game

SAN BEDA 86—Menor 15, Gamalinda 11, Ekwe 10, Aljamal 10, Escobal 8, Tecson 8, Marcelo 7, Hermida 6, Maggay 6, Lanete 3, Taganas 2.

PERPETUAL 62—Kong 18, Reyes 14, Liaz 11, Lee 7, Salanga 4, Manuel 4, Ynion 2, Balboa 2, Joe 0, Dysam 0.

Quarters: 24-8, 43-24, 67-45, 86-62

Second Game

LETRAN 92—Faundo 22, Jazul 15, Daa 12, Reposar 11, Melegrito 9, Gutilban 8, Ranises 6, Cabonce 4, Guevarra 3, Del Rosario 2, C. Foronda 0, Dangcal 0, J. Foronda 0, Latonio 0.

ST. BENILDE 81—Cabatu 22, David 15, Johnston 8, Orbeta 7, Robles 7, M. Urra 6, Montecastro 5, Layug 4, Manlapaz 3, Morial 2, Sevilla 2, Porras 0, D. Urra 0, Cadiz 0.

Quarters: 22-22, 44-42, 74-68, 92-81

GAMES MONDAY
(*The Arena*)
12 nn—St. Benilde vs Jose Rizal (jrs)
1:30 p.m.—Perpetual vs San Beda (jrs)
3 p.m.—San Sebastian vs Letran (jrs)

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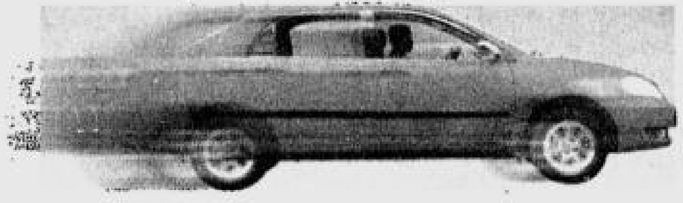

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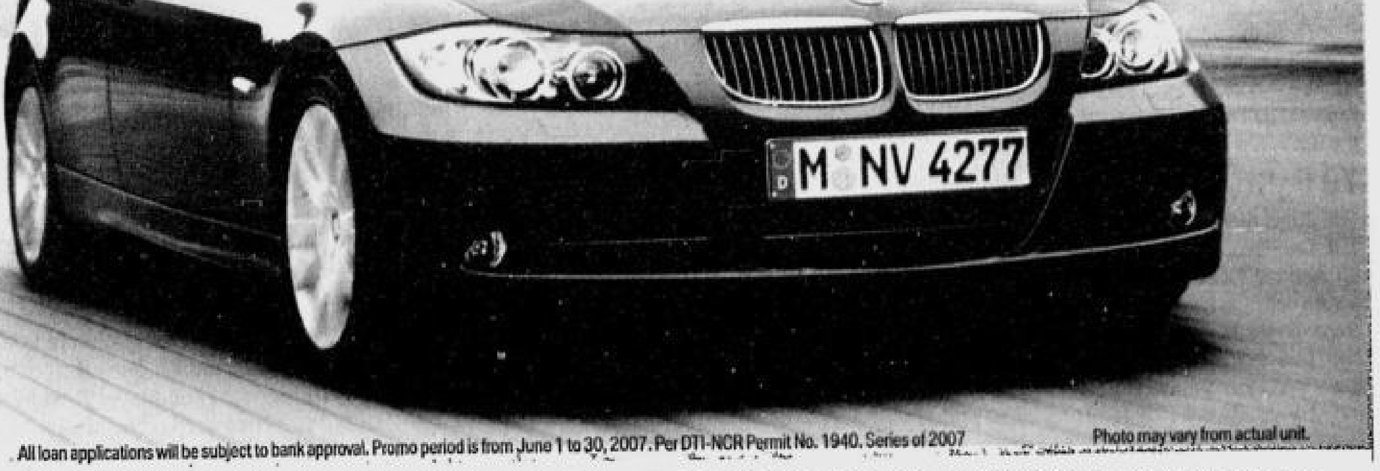

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Triple Trouble card features 3 WBO bouts

KIDAPAWAN CITY—THE BIGGEST BOXING event in Mindanao this year comes off the wraps today with the staging of the "Triple Trouble" card at the Provincial Gym here.

The free-to-the-public, 12-bout event, promoted by KingMaker Promotions of Soc Pinol, will feature three WBO Youth championships plus the pro debut of some of the best amateur fighters from the Braveheart Boxing Stable.

WBO vice president for Asia-Pacific Leon Panoncillo will supervise the bouts.

Glenn Porras (118 lb) and Indonesian Marangin Marbun (115.5) will figure in a 10-round battle for the WBO Asia Pacific interim Youth bantamweight title.

Glenn Gonzalez (126) will trade shots with Indonesia's Boydo Simanjuntak,)124.75), for the WBO Asia Pacific interim Youth featherweight crown.

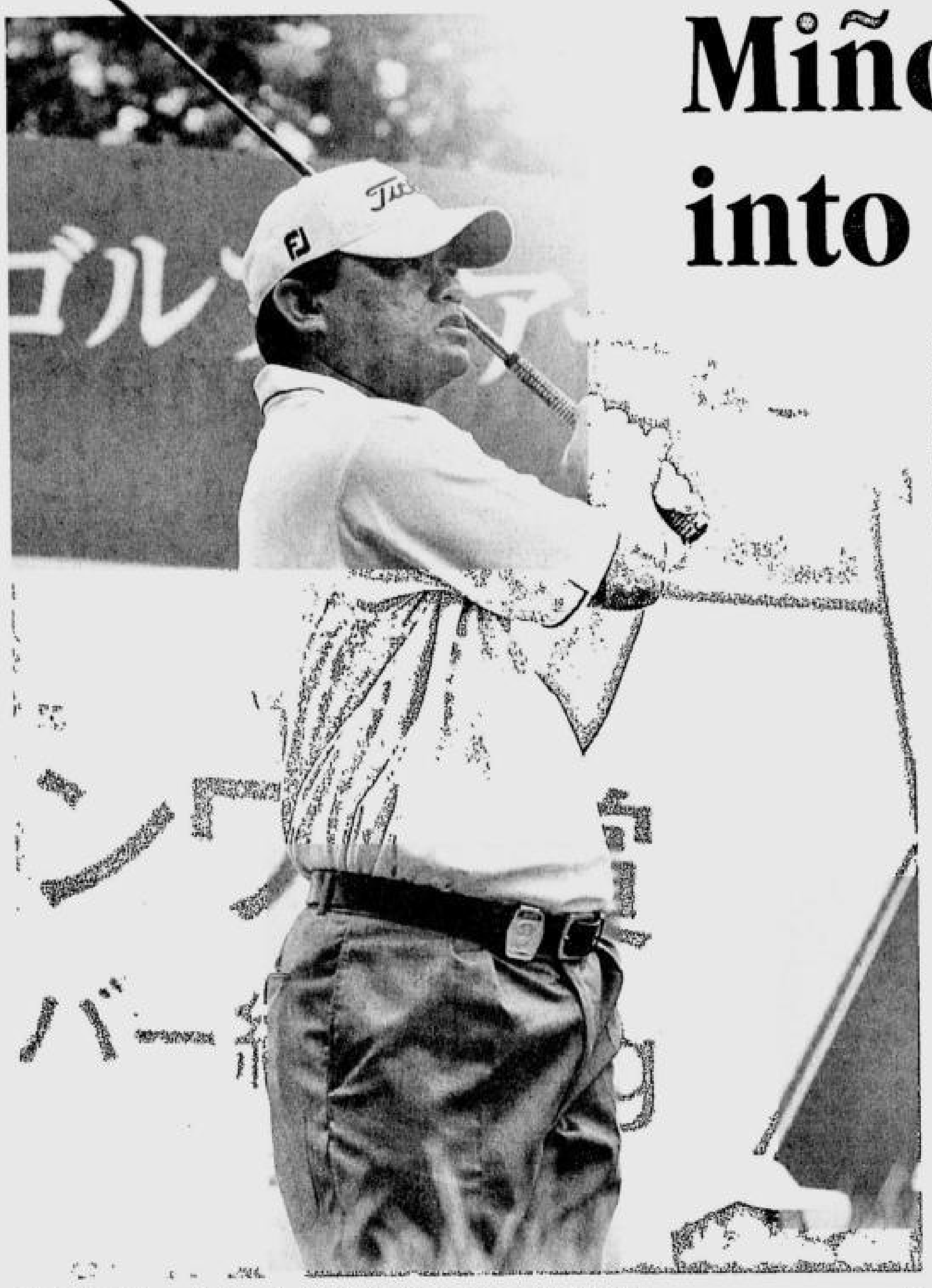
Edren Dapudong and Thai Sakmanee Sitchaleaw, both 105, will clash for the WBO Asia Pacific Youth minimumweight diadem tomorrow.

The event is also part of the thanksgiving celebration of the Pinol brothers who all came out victorious in the last elections, led by Gov. Manny Piñol (now North Cotabato vice governor), Congressman-elect Bernardo "Jun" Piñol Jr., re-elected Magpet Mayor Efren Piñol and M'lang Mayor-elect Lito Piñol.

Glenn Gonzales, an unbeaten featherweight prospect, battles Indonesia's Boydo Simanjuntak in a 10-round battle for the interim Youth WBO Asia Pacific featherweight title.

A southpaw from Palma Perez, Mlang, Gonzales is a terrific combination fighter with tremendous amateur background. Gonzales beat veteran internationalist Pedro Malco in April.

Glen Porras battles Indonesia's Marangin Marbun for the interim Youth WBO Asia Pacific bantamweight title. Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor



FRANKIE Minoza follows the flight of his ball at tee-off yesterday. AFP

Miñoza rockets into joint first

JAPAN—TURNING BACK THE clock once again in his year of renaissance, Frankie Miñoza will play in the final group tomorrow after moving into a tie for the 36-hole lead Friday at the UBS Japan Golf Tour Championship outside Tokyo.

The 47-year-old Miñoza, who posted his first win in six years at February's Philippine Open, is clearly back on song in 2007.

Lying 10th on the Asian Tour's UBS Order of Merit after his home Open win, he notched four birdies in a second round of three-under-par 67 to join Japanese star Toru Taniguchi, who returned a one-under-par 69, at the top of the leaderboard.

With only 11 players remaining under par after a humid and rainy day, Miñoza and Taniguchi are at four-under-par 136 and have a one-shot lead over Japanese Toshinori Muto, Kaname Yokoo and Shingo Katayama and overnight leader Naoya Takemoto, who stumbled with a 74 after his 63.

Miñoza will have plenty of Asian Tour company going into the weekend, with Zhang Lian-wei, playing on a sponsors' invite from UBS this week, firing an even-par 70 to lie in seventh place at 138 in his first tournament in Japan for two years.

Prayad Marksaeng, ninth on the Asian Tour's UBS Order of Merit, is one shot farther back in joint eighth while Lin Keng-chi is another stroke behind in a tie for 12th alongside SK Ho. Prom Meesawat (18th) rounds out the top performers.

For Miñoza, who finished tied for 15th here last year, it was his putter that was the club of the day. By his count, at least three times he saved par with a putt of more than 10 feet, including a courageous up and down at the last to preserve a share of the lead.

"There were at least three or four holes where I did not hit my driver very well and was in the rough, but I laid up and was able to save par. I just kept trying to hit the fairway, which is what you need to do here, and trying to make pars.

"I think I can definitely win here in Japan again," said Miñoza, who last won in the 'Land of the Rising Sun' at the 2001 Fuji Sankei Classic. " If I can shoot 68-68 the last two rounds, I will have a big chance of winning."

The cut came at six-over-par 146 and among the casualties were Thammanoon Srirot, Gaurav Ghei, Chawalit Plaphol and Yeh Wei-tze. Defending champion Tatsuhiko Takahashi (seven-over) will also be heading home early.

Pascual-Bayron prevails

THEODY PASCUAL AND GUEST partner Rufino Bayron played consistently despite the constant sudden weather shift from sunny mornings to rainy afternoons for four days as they copped the overall low gross championship in the Invitational tournament of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club in Carmona, Cavite.

Teaming up for the first time, Pascual and Bayron, a runner-up in the DHL WWW Express event last March at Cangolf, combined for 75 in their first day at the Masters course then matched par with another 75 at the Legends layout to beat more than 200 two-man squads that joined the 36-hole competition.

The twosome of club member Richie Santos and pal Allan Yap shared spotlight when they were awarded the overall net score team title with two 82s for a net 164.

Hermes Ochoa must have felt like a champion too when he won a Mitsubishi Lancer GLX during the awarding ceremony held at the Southwoods' sports club.

The car was raffled off after nobody from the 400-man field was able to make a hole-in-one in either course. Jose Roy claimed a Royal Caribbean Mexican Riviera cruise with Korean Air business class tickets for two.

The ladies pair of Beachie Abiera and Lin Mangulabnan topped Group A with 159 (81-78). Other winners were Rio Co-Marilen Bantuga 159 (78-81) in Group B, Rey dela Cruz-Patrick Tee 164 (82-82) in Group C and Johnson Caballero-Dante Felizarta 160 (79-81).

Fernando leads; Calatagan bets sparkle

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—MARK FERNANdo carded a one-under-par 71 yesterday to pace the Championship division as Calatagan bets asserted their might in the inaugural leg of the Pilipinas Amateur Golf Tour presented by Samsung at the Pueblo de Oro Golf and Country Club here.

Fernando turned out to be the only one to tame the rolling layout in the 26-man field, with fellow Calatagan stalwarts Sonny Boy Gialon, Paul Echavez and Rufino Bayron managing even par 72s.

The 16-year-old Gialan will represent the country in the Callaway Junior World Golf Championships early next month in San Diego, California. His participation, however, hinges on the release of his US visa in time for the annual tournament.

Veteran Tommy Manotoc, spearhead of the Calatagan contingent, settled for a 74 and found himself trailing teammate Jerson Balasabas, who was all alone at 73.

The Championship division will be played over 54 holes in the tournament organized by Professional Sports Management Inc.

Jovy Mendoza took the Class C crown with a couple of 85s, nipping Franco Tan via the countback. Franco, who led the first round with an 83, closed out with an 87 to match Mendoza's 170.

In ladies' action, Kristine Leonen sizzled with a net 68 to clinch the Class A title with plenty to spare. Counting her opening 78, Leonen pooled a 146 total, six shots up on Eva Minoza, who shot a 75-77 for a 152 and Marian Woo, who submitted a 75-79 for 154.

The Class B plum went to Celine Meñes with a 91-92 for 183, with Inday Miñoza settling for runner-up honors with her 99-94 and 193. Maribel San Miguel wound up third with a 113-121 for 234.

Francesca Liu clinched the Class C title pulling away following her 91-92 for 183. Liu beat Anna Roa, who fired a 105-95 for 203, by 20 shots. Imelda Arancon was third with a 234 (121-113).

After the Pueblo de Oro stop, the five-leg series will move over to Luzon with the second leg set at the Riviera Golf and Country Club in Silang, Cavite, from July 24-27.

Major backers of the series are Callaway Golf, Titleist-Footjoy by Dynamic Sports Corp., and Mizuno. Supporters include Custom Club Makers, Gargol, Paramount Property Management Company and media partner Wave 89.1. The official hotels are Microtel Inn and Suites, Lima City Hotel and Hotel Koresco.

For details, call 635-0010 or 631-5768.

Zambo mayor flags off Milo run tomorrow

ZAMBOANGA CITY MAYOR CELSO L. LOBREgat has been invited to flag off the 6,000 runners in tomorrow's Milo Marathon in Zamboanga City. The 21K qualifying race starts at 6 a.m.

Also expected to grace the opening and awarding ceremonies of the country's biggest and longest-running foot race are Rep. Erico B. Fabian and Councilors Benjamine Guingona and Eddie Saavedra.

Aside from the 21K run, also calendared are the 5K fun run, 3K for kids and the cheer-dance competition. At stake is a total cash prize of P159,000 as well as trophies and medals to the top 10 finishers in each event.

The top three finishers in the men's and women's divisions of the 21K run will advance to the 42K national finals slated on Nov. 18 in Metro Manila where a cash purse of P75,000 awaits the king and queen of the annual Milo marathon.

Abelardo Mahinay and Mary Grace delos Santos topped the Zamboanga City leg last year.

Philippine Open Badminton starts July 18 at PhilSports

THE CHASE FOR WORLD BADMINTON ranking points begins on July 18 when 34 Filipinos, including 20 singles players, clash with the world's top players in the second Bingo Bonanza Philippine Open Badminton Championships at the PhilSports Arena.

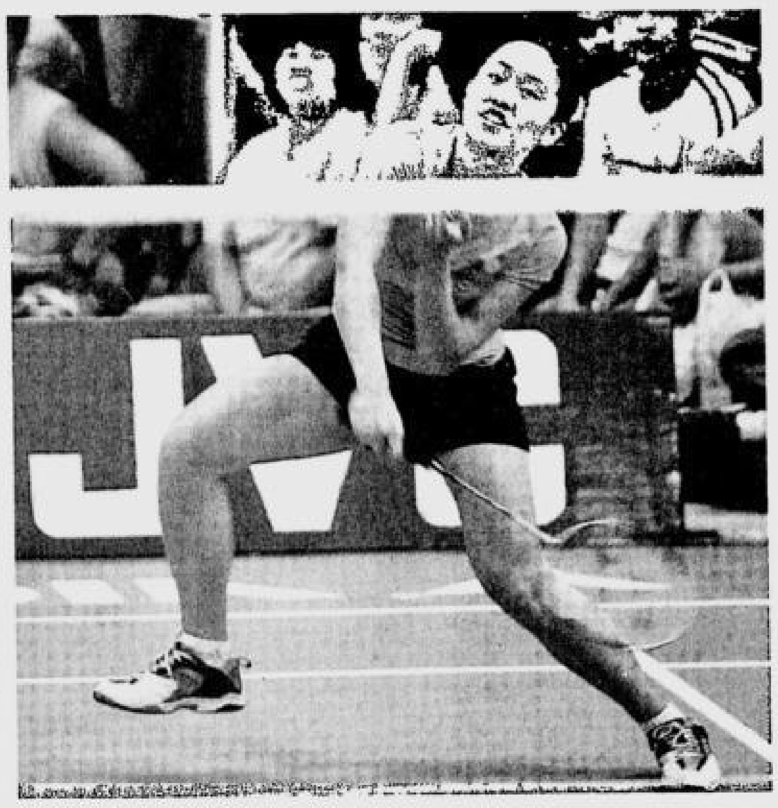
Veteran internationalist Kennevic Asuncion heads the locals' men's singles fight against China's world No. 2 Chen Hong, No. 3 Lee Chong Wei of Malaysia, No. 6 Bao Chunlai of China, No. 8 Kenneth Jonassen of Denmark and reigning Asian Games and Olympic champion Taufik Hidayat of Indonesia, the world No. 9.

Karyn Velez and Irene Chiu, the top Filipino bets in the ladies singles, will have their hands full against world No. 4 Xu Huaiwen of Germany, No. 6 Pi Hongyan of France, No. 11 Mew Choo Wong of Malaysia and No. 12 Eriko Hirose of Japan.

Kennie and sister Kennevic will also have another crack at the mixed doubles crown after losing last year to Thais Sudket Prapakamol and Saralee Thoungthangkam.

Other Filipinos aiming to hurdle the qualifying on July 17 are Lloyd Escoses, Christopher Flores, Andrei Babad, Ian Mendez, Wally Fernandez, Alfredo Mailon, Kelvin Ang, Mark Natividad, Wilmer Frias, Melvin Llanes, Ronel Estanislao, Paul Vivas, John Robert Ner, Roden Villanueva, Kevin Panganiban, Benjamin Gadi and Jobert Co.

England, Czech Republic, Germany, Finland, Italy, Denmark, Ireland, Russia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Wales, Austria, France, Portugal, Canada, United States, China, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Indonesia, Vietnam, Chinese-Taipei, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore are also represented.



IRENE CHIU: One of the Filipinos to watch

NCR holds GVL q'finals today

THE TOP EIGHT CONTENDERS FOR THE 2007 Metro Manila Shakey's GVL compete in a sudden-death crossover quarterfinal round today at the Ateneo Blue Eagle Gym.

University of the East, last year's defending champion, meets the Greenhills Lady Spikers at 1:30 p.m. Hope Christian School, which made it via the quotient system over PIQC, clashes with Bulacan-based Prenza National High School at 2:30 p.m.

University of Santo Tomas, twice denied the GVL crown in 2005 and 2006, tackles San Beda Alabang at 3:30 p.m.

St. Francis of Assisi battles Batasan Hills High School at 4:30 p.m. in this tournament presented by Shakey's Pizza and supported by Toby's Sports, Mikasa and Asics.

Winners of these matches will barge into the semifinals tomorrow starting at 1:30 p.m.

"It is difficult to predict who will enter the Magic Four as all teams are determined to win this year's NCR championship" said GVL organizer Freddie Infante.

Meanwhile, the Shakey's GVL legs in Bacolod, Iloilo and Cebu are on their elimination rounds with University of St. La Salle leading in Bacolod, Central Philippine University ahead in Iloilo and the University of Southern Philippines pacing the field in Cebu.

Cebu's quarterfinals matches today will pit Abellana National High School against USP and Pajo National High School versus University of San Carlos. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Marho races kick off

SOME P4-MILLION IN GUARANteed prizes would be at stake as the Metropolitan Association of Race Horse Owners Inc. (Marho), the country's premier group of racehorse owners, marks its 33rd founding anniversary with a special two-day racing extravaganza starting today at the Santa Ana Park.

Dubbed as the "33rd Marho Founders' Cup Racing Festival," the event will be comprised of 15 well-balanced trophy races honoring the 15 founding directors of the Marho.

Headlining today's card at the Santa Ana Park are seven trophy races, including the Antonio Araneta Cup (Race 5), Asterio Favis Cup (Race 6), Federico Moreno Cup (Race 7), Pedro Cojuangco Cup (Race 9), Jose Cojuangco Jr. Cup (Race 10), Constantino Rubio Cup (Race 12) and the Samuel Sharruf Cup (Race 13). All seven cup races carry a winners' prize of P160,000.

SPORTSWATCH

PCC anniversary derby

PASAY CITY COCKPIT, REGARDED AS THE BUSIEST cockfighting center in Metro Manila, celebrates its 21st anniversary with a 6-cock derby on July 16, 18 and 20. Pit managers Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano said P2 million in prize plus anniversary gifts to participants and patrons will be given away. Dela Rosa said this year's edition, backed by Sagupaan Complexor 3000, has an entry fee of P11,000. Meanwhile, a 4-cock derby unfolds at Pasay Cockpit on July 6 with gaffers Noli Estrellado and Albert Margem at the helm. Call 816-6750, 843-1890 and 843-1746.

70 fights in LPC derby

THE JUNE SPECIAL 3-COCK DERBY SIZZLES AT THE Las Piñas Coliseum tonight with 70 fights lined up. Andrew Tobias, a backyard breeder of gamecocks, will host his first ever derby at LPC in partnership with Baldo Perez of Batangas. The duo staked a cash prize of P350,000 for an entry fee of P5,500. Entries must be presented at the LPC office today until 2 p.m. For details, call 873-1040 and 0926-7450375 (Gerry or Julius). Meanwhile, the LPC management yesterday announced that screening of stags, 8-10 months old, will start on Aug. 1 in connection with the LPC Annual 7-stag derby. Set on Aug. 23 and 25, the stagfest stakes P1 million for an entry fee of P22,000.

Copa Filipina football kicks off tomorrow

DE LA SALLE AND ATENEO TAKE THEIR rivalry to the football pitch when the two squads collide to kick off the 2nd Terry Razon Copa Filipina Football League tomorrow at the Ateneo College football field 1.

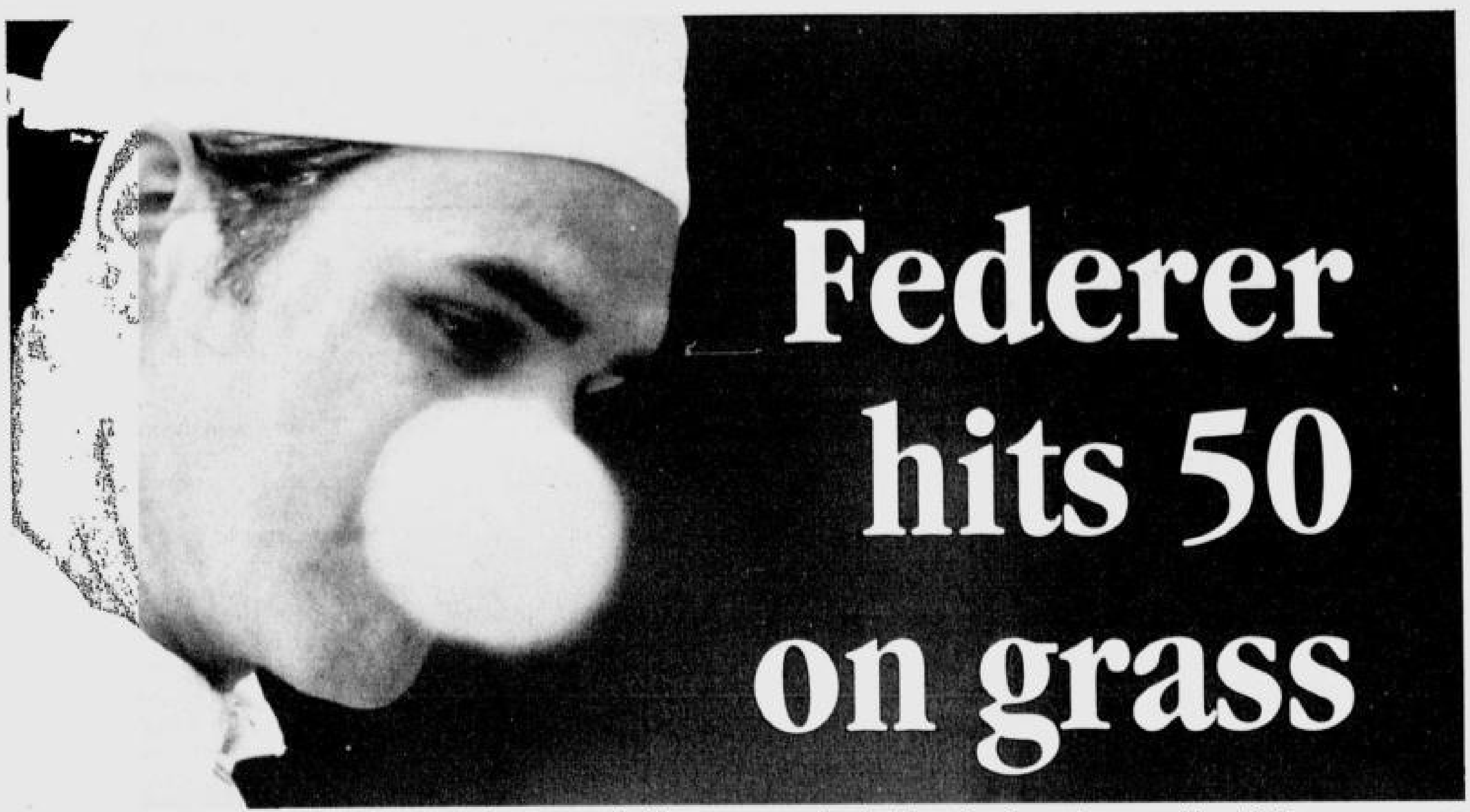
The Ateneo and La Salle booters face one another at 1:30 p.m. in the opening of the event organized by the National Capital Region Football Association in honor of the late football patron Terry Razon, mother of former national player Freddie Gonzales, with Nike as the official ball.

NCRFA president Jose Vito Borromeo and Gonzales have been invited to grace the simple inaugural ceremonies at 1 p.m. of the tournament that promises to be a regular exciting weekend treat for Metro Manila football fans lasting till October.

Fourteen elite teams—six in the Collegiate Division and eight in the Club Division—are vying in the tourney that features a unique and exciting format designed to make every game count until the championship showdown.

The Collegiate Division features Ateneo, La Salle, UP-Diliman, UP-Maroons, FEU and PUP while Union FC, the defending champion, Army, Air Force, Kaya, Lions, Pasargad, Nomads and Ateneo FC compose the Club Division.

The first and second teams in each division after the single-round preliminaries advance to the quarterfinals. The division topnotcher will be declared the Collegiate and Club champion, respectively.



Federer hits 50 on grass

THERE'LL be no reason for Roger Federer to clown around in his next game, where he faces the always dangerous Marat Safin. AFP

Nadal, Sharapova join march to next round

WIMBLEDON, ENGLAND—"GOD MADE Roger Federer."

That sign, white block letters on a dark background, stands in front of a church in Wimbledon village, about a 20-minute walk from the All England Club. Told about it, Federer appreciated the sentiment.

"I didn't see it," he said. "Maybe now I'll go have a look around."

Federer had plenty of time for sightseeing Thursday, when he competed for all of 11 minutes. That was enough to finish off Juan Martin del Potro of Argentina, 6-2, 7-5, 6-1, for the Swiss star's 50th consecutive victory on grass, in a match suspended overnight.

"Fifty is a great number to achieve," Federer said. "I'm delighted about that, but I haven't won the tournament."

His bid to win a fifth consecutive Wimbledon title, something only Bjorn Borg has done in the past 100 years, now runs into a tougher test: a third-round showdown Friday against former No. 1 Marat Safin, who beat qualifier Aisam-Ul-Haq Qureshi of Pakistan, 6-4, 6-2, 7-6 (4).

The 26th-seeded Russian is only 2-7 against Federer over their careers but did beat him in the 2005 Australian Open semifinals en route to one of his two major titles.

"He's obviously a player who can always upset anybody on any day. I hope he's not going to have one of those crazy good days against me," said Federer, who has a sore throat. "But I think I can pretty much control also how things are being played on grass."

The upsets have been kept to a minimum through the tournament's first four days, and the four seeded men who bowed out Thursday aren't exactly known for their prowess on grass: No. 11 Tommy Robredo, No. 17 David Ferrer, No. 24 Juan Ignacio Chela and No. 29 Agustin Calleri have made a total of two visits to Wimbledon's third round.

SHARAPOVA AFP

Winners included No. 2 Rafael Nadal, No. 4 Novak Djokovic, No. 9 James Blake, 2002 champion Lleyton Hewitt and unseeded Wayne Arthurs, who at 36 is the oldest competitor.

Djokovic beat Amer Delic of the United States, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 (4), leaving Blake and No. 3 Andy Roddick as the only American men still around of the 14 who began the tournament. That matches the fewest US men in Wimbledon's third round over the past 40 years; there also were two in 1998.

That's more than the locals can cheer for the rest of the way. Four-time semifinalist Tim Henman, the last Briton playing singles, departed with a 7-6 (3), 7-6 (5), 3-6, 2-6, 6-1 loss to Feliciano Lopez of Spain. That came a few hours after Katie O'Brien, the final British woman, lost 6-0, 6-1 to No. 31 Michaella Krajicek, younger sister of 1996 Wimbledon champion Richard.

The women's tournament has been even more devoid of surprises, and the biggest ones Thursday were losses by No. 13 Dinara Safina and No. 17 Tatiana Golovin. Defending champion Amelie Mauresmo, 2004 champion Maria Sharapova and three-time champion Venus Williams all won in straight sets.

Williams, two points from losing in the first round, had no such trouble in a 6-2, 6-2 victory over Hana Sromova of the Czech Republic, then went out and paired with younger sister Serena for their first doubles match since 2003. The Williams sisters, who have won six Grand Slam doubles titles together, eliminated Claire Curran and Anne Keothavong of Britain, 6-1, 6-3.

2004 champion Sharapova won her second-round match, 6-0, 6-3, over Severine Bremond of France.

Nadal—the man Federer beat in last year's Wimbledon final and lost to in the past two French Open finals—is looking forward to seeing what happens against Safin.

"It's going to be an interesting match," the No. 2-seeded Spaniard said after his 6-2, 6-4, 6-1 win against Werner Eschauer of Austria.

Safin used to say he disliked grass, and Wimbledon is the only Grand Slam tournament at which he's never reached the semifinals. He registered a new complaint Thursday: the high price and low quality of the food in the players' restaurant.

In Moscow, Safin said, "We have better pasta for 20 bucks, that's for sure." *AP*

No more doubles trouble please—Mirza

PEER REUTERS

LONDON—INDIA'S SANIA Mirza hopes her decision to renew her doubles partnership with Israel's Shahar Peer at Wimbledon does not stir up another religious storm.

"We're playing tennis, we're not making statements. We're just here to play tennis and we're here to perform and be the best we can be," the Indian No. 1 said on Thursday.

The last time Mirza, a Muslim, joined forces with Peer at the 2005 Japan Open, their association was short-lived.

Under pressure from militants furious over a Muslim and a Jew playing together, Mirza called for some time out.

She hopes their second stab at success will be remembered more for their on-court exploits.

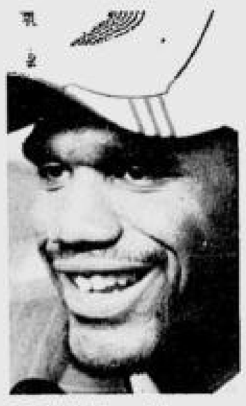
"We've grown up together. We're great friends. So we said, why not?" said Mirza, who comes from the southern Indian city of Hyderabad.

In 2002, Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi was threatened with a suspension from Pakistan's tennis federation when he entered the Wimbledon men's doubles with Israel's Amir Hadad.

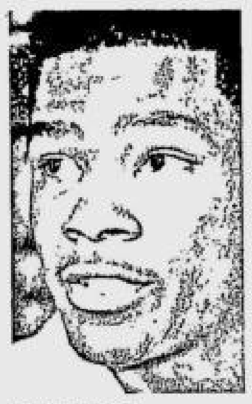
The partnership won the duo a humanitarian award but Mirza does not want any similar recognition. *Reuters*

MIRZA REUTERS

YI: Mystery REUTERS



ODEN: Top pick REUTERS



DURANT: Scorer REUTERS

NOAH: Bulls AP

Oden top NBA pick; Yi 6th

NEW YORK—THE PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS settled months of debate when they chose Greg Oden over Kevin Durant with the No. 1 pick in a highly anticipated NBA draft on Thursday.

Portland opted for the 7-foot (2.13 meter) center who can dominate a game with his defense over the sensational scoring of Durant, who would have been the No. 1 pick in many other years after one of the most outstanding first-year seasons in US college history.

As expected, Durant was quickly taken second by the Seattle SuperSonics, who traded All-Star guard Ray Allen, their leading scorer, to Boston. Fans booed the Allen trade at a draft party for the Sonics, who still face losing Rashard Lewis to free agency.

The 6-foot-9 Durant, who averaged 25.8 points and 11.1 rebounds and was considered the most talented player in the draft, didn't consider himself the Sonics' savior.

"Not at all, not at all," Durant said. "When you play since you were eight or nine years old, you know the game is not a one-man sport. I'm far from being a savior."

Joining Durant to help the Sonics rebuild is Georgetown University's Jeff Green, picked by Boston with the No. 5 pick.

Oden led Ohio State University as he averaged 15.7 points and shot nearly 62 percent while drawing comparisons to Bill Russell for his rebounding and shot blocking abilities.

The Atlanta Hawks used the No. 3 pick, their first of two in the lottery on Al Horford of the University of Florida, the two-time defending US college champions.

Florida became the first school with three players selected in the top 10 of the same draft. They made it when Corey Brewer went to the Minnesota Timberwolves at No. 7 and Joakim Noah—the son of French tennis great Yannick Noah—was taken by the Chicago Bulls two picks later.

The Memphis Grizzlies grabbed point guard Michael Conley Jr., Oden's teammate, at No. 4.

The Milwaukee Bucks took a chance at No. 6 on the draft's mystery player, 7-foot Chinese forward Yi Jianlian.

The Charlotte Bobcats took University of North Carolina's Brandan Wright at No. 8, and traded his rights to the Golden State Warriors for six-year NBA guard Jason Richardson. Golden State chose Italian guard Marco Belinelli with the 18th pick. *AP*

US OPEN

Park grabs lead; Wie, Webb sink

SOUTHERN PINES, NORTH CAROLINA—IN a US Women's Open dominated by talk of teenagers, one of them wound up atop the leaderboard and hardly anyone noticed.

As 17-year-old Michelle Wie continued her free fall and 12-year-old Alexis Thompson played carefree until it was too dark to continue, US LPGA Tour rookie Angela Park, 18, birdied her first three holes and hung on for a 3-under 68, leaving her in the lead in the first round for the second straight major.

No rain touched the turf at Pine Needles, but play was suspended for 3½ hours because of lightning in the area, allowing only the morning batch of 78 players to finish the round.

Thompson, the youngest qualifier in US.Women's Open history, three-putted the 18th green for a bogey that put her at 3 over par after nine holes.

Wie went off early, and fell off the map quickly. She hit only four fairways, matched her highest score in a US Women's Open with an 82.

Wie extended her string to 21 rounds without breaking par.

Karrie Webb failed to make a birdie and walked off with an 83, her highest score on the US LPGA Tour.

Three players were at 2 under at various points on Pine Needles—In-Bee Park (16 holes), Jee Young Lee (12) and Karine Icher (10).

Defending champion Annika Sorenstam was at even par through 13 holes. *AP*

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES AND PERIODS ON PROHIBITED ACTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE JULY 14, 2007 PLEBISCITE TO RATIFY THE CREATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF OMAR OUT OF THE MOTHER MUNICIPALITY OF LUUK, SULU, PURSUANT TO MUSLIM MINDANAO AUTONOMY ACT (MMAA) NO. 194.
x - x

ABALOS, Benjamin S.	Chairman
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.	Commissioner
TUASON, Florentino A., Jr.	Commissioner
BRAWNER, Romeo A.	Commissioner
SARMIENTO, Rene V.	Commissioner
FERRER, Nicodemo T.	Commissioner

Promulgated: 28 June 2007

RESOLUTION NO. 8208

Pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Act No. 7160, Republic Act No. 7166, Republic Act No. 9054, Republic Act No. 6734, Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act No. 25, and other election laws, the Commission on Elections RESOLVED to adopt, as it hereby RESOLVES to adopt, the following Calendar of Activities and Periods on Prohibited Acts for the conduct of the July 14, 2007 plebiscite to ratify the creation of the Municipality of Omar in the Province of Sulu, pursuant to MMAA No. 194, to wit:

DATE/PERIOD	PLEBISCITE ACTIVITIES	PROHIBITED ACTS COVERED/INVOLVED
June 27, 2007 (WED) to July 31, 2007 (TUE)	PLEBISCITE PERIOD	1. Bearing, carrying or transporting firearms or other deadly weapons in public places, including any building, street, park, private vehicle or public conveyance, even if licensed to possess or carry the same, unless authorized in writing by the Commission. (Sec. 261 (p) (q) (s) OEC) as amended by Sec. 32 R.A. No. 7166; 2. Suspension of elective local officials. (Sec. 261 (x) OEC); 3. Transfer of officers and employees in the Civil Service. (Sec. 261 (h) OEC); 4. Organization or maintenance of reaction forces, strike forces or other similar forces. (Sec. 261 (u) OEC).
June 27, 2007 (WED) to July 31, 2007 (TUE)		1. Appointment or hiring of new employees. (Sec. 261 (g) OEC); 2. Creation or filling up of new positions. (Sec. 261 (g) OEC); 3. Promotions or giving of salary increases, remuneration or privilege (Sec. 261 (g) OEC); 4. Construction of public works, delivery of materials for public works and issuance of treasury warrants or similar devices for a future undertaking chargeable against public funds. (Sec. 261 (w) OEC); 5. Releases, disbursements or expenditures of public works and social services and development. (Sec. 261 (v) OEC); 6. Appointment or use of special policemen, special/confidential agents or the like. (Sec. 261 (m) OEC); 7. Use of armored land, water or aircraft. (Sec. 261 (r) OEC); 8. Wearing of uniforms and bearing of arms. (Sec. 261 (s) OEC).
June 27, 2007 (WED) to July 12, 2007 (THU)	CAMPAIGN PERIOD	
July 6, 2007 (FRI)	Submission to Comelec of complete list of all special policemen, special/confidential agents or persons performing similar functions in the employ of barangay chairman, municipal mayor or any appointing authority. Last day for appointment of members of Plebiscite Committees	
July 11, 2007 (WED) to July 14, 2007 (SAT)	Posting of the Certified List of Voters	
July 13, 2007 (FRI)	Inspection of Polling Places	1. Liquor Ban (starting 12 Midnight) – Selling, furnishing, offering, buying, serving, or taking intoxicating liquor, etc. (Sec. 261 (dd), (1), OEC). 2. Campaigning (Sec. 3, OEC)
July 14, 2007 (SAT)	PLEBISCITE DAY	1. Cockfighting, and other forms of gambling, holding fairs, boxing and/or any other similar sports (Sec. 261 (dd) OEC) 2. Giving, accepting free transportation, food, drinks and things of value (Sec. 89, OEC). 3. Selling, furnishing, offering, buying, serving, or taking intoxicating liquor, etc. (Sec. 261 (dd), (1), OEC). 4. Opening of booths or stalls for the sale of merchandise, refreshment, etc. within 30 meters radius from polling place (Sec. 261 (dd), (2) OEC). 5. Campaigning (Sec. 3, OEC)
July 31, 2007 (TUE)	LAST DAY OF PLEBISCITE PERIOD	

Let this Resolution be published by the Education and Information Department (EID) in a newspaper of general circulation, and in a newspaper with local circulation in the Municipality of Luuk, Sulu. The Deputy Executive Director for Operations shall furnish the Regional Election Director of ARMM, the Provincial Election Supervisor of Sulu, the Election Officer of Luuk, Sulu, the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government, the Secretary of the Department of Education, The Governor of Sulu, the Municipal Mayor and Municipal Treasurer of Luuk, Sulu, and the DepEd Supervisor of the Municipality of Luuk, Sulu, with a copy of this Resolution.

The Election Officer of Luuk, Sulu, under the direct supervision of the Provincial Election Supervisor of Sulu, shall give this Resolution the widest publication in his municipality.

This Resolution shall take effect upon its promulgation.

SO ORDERED.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS
Chairman

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

ROMEO A. BRAWNER
Commissioner

RENE V. SARMIENTO
Commissioner

NICODEMO T. FERRER
Commissioner

(PDI – June 30, 2007)

P90-P100M budget for SEAG

GARCIA: P80,000 per head. PDI PHOTO

By June Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMMISSION is ready to spend P90-P100 million for the national contingent for this year's Southeast Asian Games slated Dec. 6-16 in Nakhon, Rachasima, and two satellite venues in Thailand.

PSC Commissioner Ritchie Garcia said the government sports is allocating P50 million to the actual participation of Team Philippines, which the SEAG Task Force, composed of officials from the Philippine Olympic Committee and the PSC, is forming from a roster of 721 candidate-athletes.

At least P80,000 would be spent for each member of the delegation, which officials estimate will be no more than 500 depending on who will survive the training camp supervised by the task force.

Another P20 million will be set aside for equipment while P15 million is reserved for the uniforms of the athletes, coaches and officials, including the parade uniforms during the opening and closing ceremonies of the games.

"The estimate was based on the expenses of the 2003 Vietnam Games where we spent almost P100 million for the entire delegation," said Garcia.

He added that out of the P85 million earmarked for actual participation, equipment and uniforms, a 10-percent contingency fund will also be made available for emergency purposes.

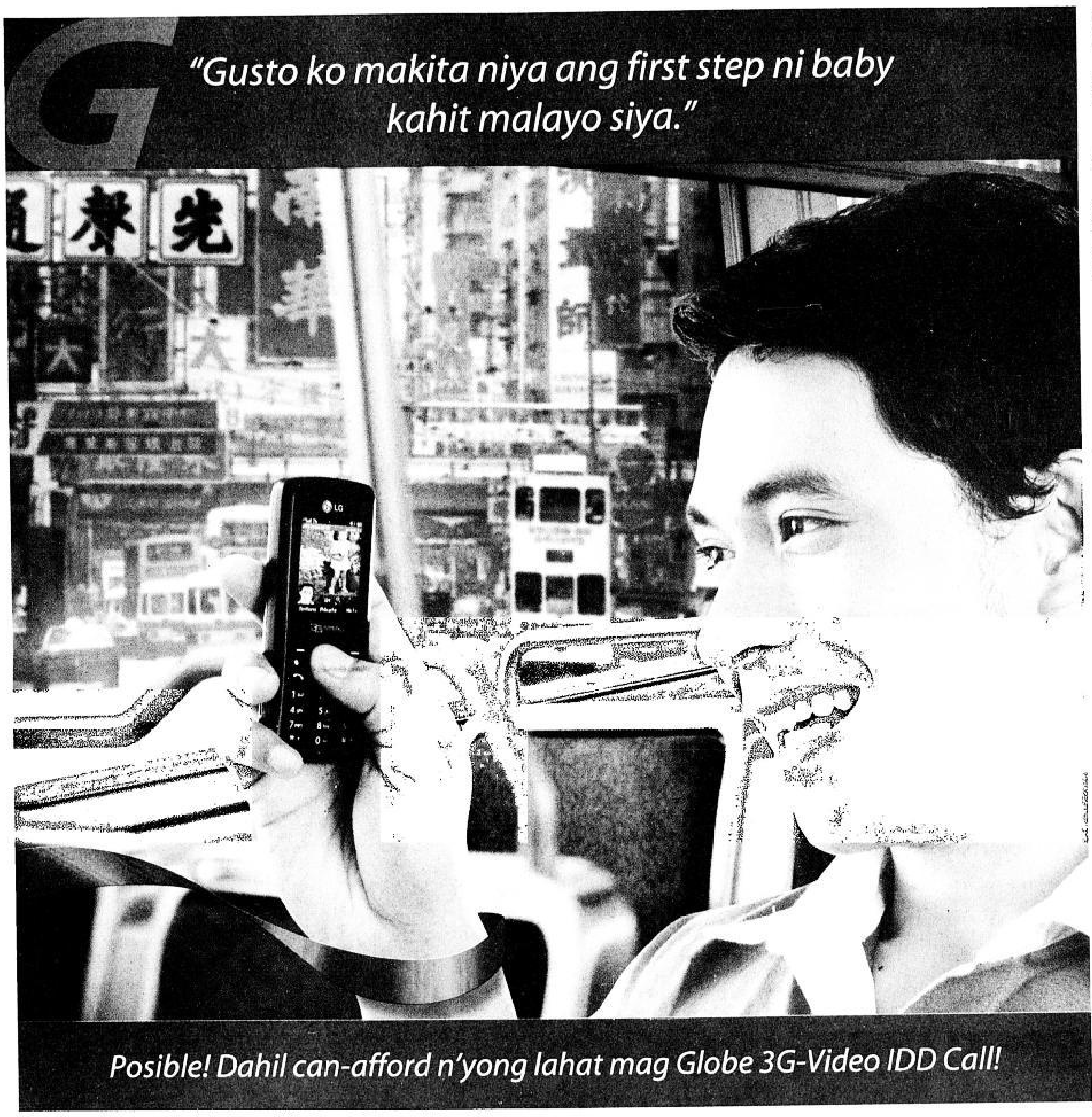
"Setting aside a contingency fund is a normal practice. If the delegation fails to spend the contingency, the money will go back to the PSC," Garcia told the Inquirer.

Garcia cited a case during the Asian Games in Doha, Qatar last year where some of the athletes and officials failed to catch their flight back to Manila and had to stay for another day in the middle-eastern country.

The long-serving commissioner of the PSC said that the task force would name at least 400 athletes who will figure in 40 disciplines where 445 gold medals are at stake.

The Philippines won its first-ever overall championships while hosting the 23rd edition of the games in 2005.

Garcia, however, stressed that rugby, futsal and polo, which are in the SEAG for the first time, would have to look for funding elsewhere for their athletes to compete in the games.



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2634 Series of 2007. See flyers for details.

SBP eyes RP staging of Asian youth

THE SAMAHANG BASKETBOL NG PILIPINAS said yesterday it will ask the international basketball federation (Fiba) to hold the 2008 Fiba-Asia Youth Championship here, confident that the country can win the hosting rights.

SBP executive director Patrick Gregorio said the Philippines signified its intention to bid for the tournament in a recent Fiba-Asia meeting.

GREGORIO

"I think we have a good chance of winning our bid," Gregorio said in yesterday's Scoop session at the Kamayan Restaurant-Padre Faura. "Offering to host the Asian Youth would signify that the BAP-SBP has been fully organized and that the programs we have prepared are ready for implementation."

The formal bid will be submitted during the Fiba-Asia men's championship set late July in Japan.

Gregorio said the BAP-SBP is also keen in implementing a nationwide grassroots program that will include the 14-under, 17-under, 19-under and 21-under categories for both the men's and women's divisions.

"We have already prepared mass based-oriented programs patterned after Fiba's, the blueprint of which I will be submitting to the BAP-SBP board during its first ever meeting on Monday," said Gregorio.

Sardenas duo makes winning a family thing

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY.

Just weeks after Janet Belarmino emerged as one of the first three Southeast Asian women to summit Mount Everest, her husband Ricky Sardenas and his team also became the first to beat the national team of China in the Chinese sport dragon boat.

Sardenas and his seven fellow team members, all members of the Philippine Coastguard just like Belarmino, emerged as the overall champion of the 2007 Macau International Dragon Boat Race Competition, after getting four golds in 500-meter and 250-meter races.

"The sport began in China so it is really a big thing for our team to be able to win over China," Belarmino told the INQUIRER recently.

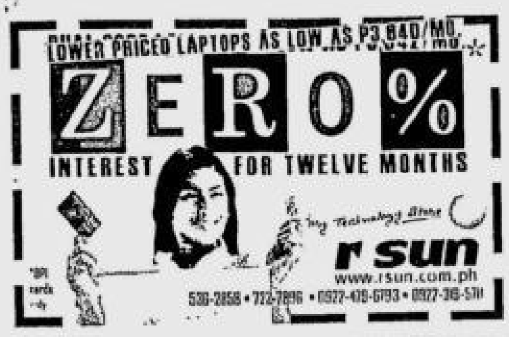
She also used to be part of a university rowing team. It was through the sport that she and Sardena met. Sardena was already a member of the national team that time. They have a 6-month-old son.

The other members of the winning team are Perlito Idorot, Ednamzug de Guzman, Ric National, Ambrocio Gontinas, Raymond Morales, Junrey Dayumat and Rolando Isidro. They are all members of the Coastguard Special Services.

Spokesperson Lt. Senior Grade Armand Balilo said the dragon boat team left the country on June 16 to join the 12-day traditional dragon boat race in Macau.

The members bested teams from China, Singapore, Malaysia, Macau, Hongkong and Australia, the Coastguard also said.

Inspired by the achievement, Dr. Ted Esguerra, who accompanied the Mount Everest Team last year and this year and who also brought the dragon boat team to the Coastguard, said he was also proposing the forming of a female dragon boat team.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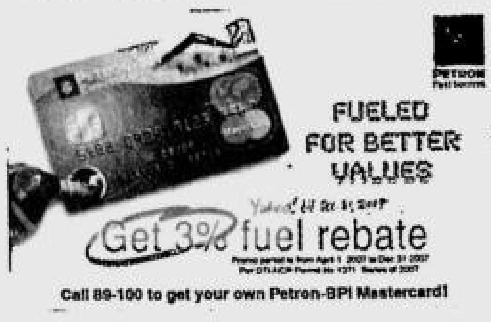
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BIR collections continued to falter in June

IN THIS ISSUE

Gaming expert invests $2M in local IT firm /B2

Cash growth slowed in May, BSP reports /B3

6-month shortfall rises to P45.25B

By Michelle V. Remo

TAX COLLECTIONS CONTINUED TO SUFFER IN June, bloating the revenue shortfall that pushed the government farther away from meeting its budget-deficit reduction target for the year.

Preliminary documents from the Bureau of Internal Revenue as of June 27 showed that the taxes collected by the agency for the month amounted to only P36.9 billion, still P19.62 billion lower than the target of P56.52 billion for June.

The tax collections likewise represented a P10.92-billion drop from the P47.82 billion recorded in the same month last year.

For January to June, total tax collections amounted to P307.44 billion, representing a P7.59-billion increase from P299.85 billion a year ago.

However, compared to the P352.69-billion target for the period, the six-month collections were already short by P45.25 billion. This means the government has to raise an additional P45.25 billion than what was programmed for the second half to meet its full-year tax collection goal.

For the entire year, the BIR is tasked to collect P765 billion. Of the amount, P730 billion would be the direct responsibility of the BIR. The balance consists of taxes on

BIR COLLECTIONS/ B2

Customs to go after oil smugglers

THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS HAS been directed to enhance measures to address suspected smuggling of oil, which has been blamed partly for shortfalls in the collection of taxes and duties of the agency.

The tax audit team of the Department of Finance said in a study that the volume of crude oil imports in the first quarter dropped 26 percent from a year ago. However, the BOC's collection of taxes on imported crude dropped by 48 percent.

The study added that the BOC's collection of taxes on imported finished oil products in the first quarter rose by only 9.3 percent year-on-year, but the volume of imports rose by 31.2 percent.

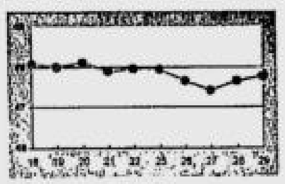
"There is a weak link between oil imports and tax collection," the study said. The tax audit team said one probable reason for this was that some oil imports were able to enter the country without paying the proper taxes.

The BOC was ordered to coordinate with the Department of Energy and the various economic zones to better verify actual oil import figures, and with law enforcement agencies to run after smugglers.

CUSTOMS/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



JUNE

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 46.24 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., June 29, 2007

STOCK MARKET

Shares close 0.56% higher

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.56-PERCENT higher yesterday as fund managers built up portfolios in certain stocks in time for the closing of their books for the month, dealers said.

The composite index added 20.23 points to 3,665.23, the day's high.

The all-share index rose 15.93 points to 2,361.15.

SHARES/ B2

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Gaming expert invests $2M in local IT firm

Gustafsson named prexy of DFNNI

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

ONLINE GAMING EXPERT PER Gustafsson has invested $2 million in Singapore-based DFNN International Pte. Ltd. (DFNNI), a subsidiary of publicly listed Philippine information technology solutions provider Diversified Financial Network Inc. (DFNN).

In a disclosure, DFNN said its board has approved a resolution relating to the subscription agreement between Gustafsson and DFNNI.

DFNN had requested the Philippine Stock Exchange to suspend trading of its shares last Thursday, the date of its disclosure. Trading of DFNN shares resumed yesterday.

Gustafsson is a well-known pioneer in the early stages of the online gaming movement. He has an extensive knowledge of the online gaming business and a large network of people in the gaming business worldwide. Gustafsson has worked for Boss Media AB in Sweden as a sales manager and in Gaming VC as vice president for new business development. He recently came out of retirement to take advantage of the Asian online gaming opportunity.

"We are glad and proud to partner with Gustafsson in DFNNI," said DFNN chair Ramon C. Garcia Jr. "His experience and expertise in gaming will be a major asset in our expansion into the international online gaming arena."

Once the deal is fully completed, DFNNI will undergo organizational changes. Garcia will resign as president of the Singapore-listed firm DFNNI and assume the position of chair while Gustafsson will be appointed president.

The number of the members of the board of the company will be increased from three to seven. The corporate name of DFNNI will also be changed to Pacific Gaming Investments Pte. Ltd. Singapore.

Global gambling revenue is estimated to hit $144 billion in 2011 after growing at an annually compounded rate of 7.2 percent a year, according to a recent report released by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP.

Worldwide gambling revenue is expected to rise from $101.6 billion in 2006, driven by new casinos and upgrades of existing casinos in all regions of the world, the report said.

Earlier this year, DFNN's Garcia reported that the company's revenues in the gaming and business process outsourcing (BPO) had positively impacted on the DFNN Group's performance.

In 2006, DFNN reported annual profits of P77.6 million led by sales from DFNNI and Intelligent Wave Philippines Inc. (IWI), the group's division for BPO and custom application solutions.

Ongpin joins Philex board

FORMER TRADE AND INDUSTRY minister Roberto "Bobby" Ongpin has joined the board of publicly listed Philex Mining Corp.

ONGPIN

Ongpin replaces Highlands Prime Inc. president Antonio Henson, who resigned last June 26, Philex said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Ongpin chairs publicly listed online gaming firm Philweb.com and its affiliate, ISM Communications Corp.

He was a former managing partner of SyCip Gorres Velayo & Co. and served as trade and industry minister from 1979 to 1986. Ongpin is a certified public accountant and has a master's degree from the Harvard Business School.

Philex is one of the country's most profitable mining companies and expects second-quarter earnings to be better than the first with the spike in metal prices.

"(Gold) prices have gone up," Philex president Jose Ernesto Villaluna said. Gold has been trading around $650 an ounce today compared with $640 in the first quarter.

The rise in metal prices was also evident in the first quarter, with prices averaging $2.93 a pound for copper and $640 an ounce for gold, up from $2.50 for copper and $561 for gold in 2006.

Philex's consolidated net income for the first quarter of 2007 amounted to P1 billion, almost twice the net income of P574.5 million for the same period in 2006. Higher metals sold, combined with higher prices, boosted the first-quarter operating revenue to P2.8 billion from P2.1 billion last year. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

IPVG goes on shopping mode

By Riza T. Olchondra

LISTED E-GAMES PUBLISHER AND DATA center provider IPVG Corp. is preparing to acquire an IT company that will complement its existing businesses in Internet-based communications, consumer content and outsourcing.

The publicly listed company made the announcement after booking unaudited revenues of P175 million and a net income of P30 million for the second quarter.

The figure for the April-June period increased fivefold from the previous quarter and marked a turnaround from last year's P17.5-million loss.

Stressing that the company was bullish on growth after the turnaround, IPVG CEO Enrique Gonzales told reporters that the company was keen on both acquisitions and the expansion of existing businesses.

"Having a very healthy bottom line allows us to look at (prospective) acquisitions," Gonzales said.

However, he declined to provide details on the name and nature of IPVG's first-ever acquisition.

Gonzales said further acquisitions could be financed by tapping the debt market and could later be repaid through the cash generated by the business itself.

IPVG closed at P7 a share yesterday after trading at a range of P6.90 to P7.20 at the Philippine Stock Exchange.

BIR collections . . .

From page B1

government securities, the volume of issuance of which is depended on the Bureau of the Treasury.

The tax collection target assigned to the BIR, the biggest revenue source of the government, was consistent with the goal of reducing the budget deficit to P63 billion this year from last year's P64.8 billion.

Records also showed that of the tax collections from January to June, P196.75 billion were accounted for by the Large Taxpayers Service, which is tasked to collect taxes from more than 1,000 big companies.

Tax collections by the LTS for the first six months was short by P29.64 billion of its target of P226.4 billion for the period.

The monthly shortfalls in tax collections since the start of the year was cited as the reason why Internal Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag was told to leave his post.

Buñag will be temporarily replaced by Deputy Commissioner Lilian Hefti while Malacañang looks for a new BIR chief.

Shares close . . .

From page B1

There were 63 gainers and 57 losers, while 57 stocks were unchanged. Volume reached 2.42 billion shares worth P5.96 billion.

"The market was in a consolidation mode, with some investors doing some cherry-picking on the last trading day of June," said Astro del Castillo of First Grade Holdings.

A-shares of Meralco jumped P9 to P113 and the B-shares also added P9 to P115.

"Meralco appears to be undervalued considering its earnings growth potential," said Nestor Aguila of DA Market Securities.

He said Meralco's financial health was expected to improve as a new regulatory regime takes effect in the second half of the year.

The regulatory transition will reduce profit uncertainty for Meralco because tariffs would be set to reflect costs and would no longer be prone to being challenged in the courts.

Shares in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. or PLDT, the biggest listed Philippine company in terms of market capitalization, retreated P20 to P2,650. *AFP*

Customs . . .

From page B1

The BOC was likewise asked to enhance the implementation of the "oil marking" system, under which customs personnel put a certain chemical on oil imports whose taxes and duties have already been paid.

The perennial problem of smuggling has been blamed for substantial losses in potential revenues for the government. Previous estimates said the government was losing about P200 billion a year due to unpaid taxes and duties resulting from smuggling.

In the first quarter, the BOC collected P40.2 billion in taxes and duties. This was short by P6.7 billion from the target of P46.9 billion. The BOC is the second-biggest revenue source for the national government after the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

From January to May, the BOC collected P75 billion. Finance officials said this was not encouraging as it meant the BOC should have collected P30.3 billion in June alone to meet its six-month goal of P105.3 billion.

For the full year, the BOC is tasked to collect P228.2 billion. This goal is consistent with the aim of reducing the government's budget deficit to P63 billion this year from last year's P64.8 billion.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales said his office acknowledged the shortfall in revenue collection and that the BOC would intensify its existing measures intended to plug leakages in import duties.

Morales said his office was giving the commitment that it would meet its full-year collection target despite the shortfall in the first five months. *Michelle V. Remo*

CURRENCIES

June 29, 2007

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.743992	1.000000	46.3290
Japan	Yen	0.006041	0.008120	0.3762
United Kingdom	Pound	1.489621	2.002200	92.7599
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.095183	0.127936	5.9271
Switzerland	Franc	0.604135	0.812018	37.6200
Canada	Dollar	0.703538	0.945626	43.8099
Singapore	Dollar	0.484622	0.651381	30.1778
Australia	Dollar	0.629488	0.846095	39.1987
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.973611	2.652731	122.8984
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.198382	0.266645	12.3534
Brunei	Dollar	0.483049	0.649266	30.0798
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000110	0.0051
Thailand	Baht	0.023619	0.031746	1.4708
UAE	Dirham	0.202568	0.272272	12.6141
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.344100	62.2708
Korea	Won	0.000803	0.001079	0.0500
China	Yuan**	0.097700	0.131318	6.0838
Argentina	Peso	0.240969	0.323887	15.0054
Brazil	Real	0.386088	0.518941	24.0420
Denmark	Kroner	0.134372	0.180610	8.3675
India	Rupee	0.018289	0.024582	1.1389
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.214716	0.288600	13.3705
Mexico	New Peso	0.068894	0.092601	4.2901
New Zealand	Dollar	0.572434	0.769408	35.6459
South Africa	Rand	0.105029	0.141168	6.5402
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022658	0.030455	1.4109

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—June 28, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen
** Asian time closing rate as of June 28, 2007

DISCLOSURES

JOHN L. Lao, Leon L. Lao and Yin Yong L. Lao were elected directors of Chemrez Technologies Inc., while Corazon M. Buenconsejo, Jose Fernando B. Camus, Monico V. Jacob and Renato L. Paras were likewise elected as independent directors.

***

MULTITECH Investments Corp. has postponed its annual stockholders' meeting originally set on June 29 to August 31. Record date is on July 28.

***

JOSE S. Alejandro, Mel V. Velarde, Juan Carlos del Rosario, John Philip J. Lesaca, Eduardo Martin T. Lichauco Jr., Francisco D. Lumen and Michael T. Toledo have been elected directors of Information Capital Technology Ventures Inc.

Compiled by Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 29, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.2	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	12	12	11.75	12	36,200
71.5	30.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	68.5	69.5	68	69.5	858,400
73.5	45.5	Bank of the Philippine Islands	69	70	68	68.5	2,259,700
935	630	China Banking Corp.	910	920	890	920	16,870
20	18.18	Citystate Savings Bank	20	20	20	20	600
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc	0.56	0.57	0.55	0.55	3,000,000
75.5	31.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	69	72	69	71.5	2,272,900
65	32.5	Philippine National Bank	60	62	60	60.5	176,800
52	39.5	Philippine Trust Co.	52	52	52	52	1,000
39.57	14.13	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	36.5	37	35.5	35.5	1,429,800
90	42.5	Security Bank Corp.	84	84	84	84	101,100
66	41.54	Union Bank of the Philippines	62	62	61.5	62	75,600
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.72	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.2	565,000
1.5	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.2	1.26	849,000
14.25	1.5	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	12.25	12.5	12.25	12.25	659,300
8.8	3.5	Filipino Fund Inc.	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	20,000
1.6	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.26	1.3	596,000
1,710.00	1,500.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,675.00	1,685.00	1,675.00	1,685.00	920
5	4.05	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.4	4.4	4.35	4.35	2,186,000
3.1	0.99	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	3	3	2.85	2.85	2,000
1,005.00	210	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	855	860	850	860	7,970
2,250.00	1,895.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,160.00	2,160.00	2,160.00	2,160.00	1,810
1.94	1.2	iVantage Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	113,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
68	41	First Gen Corp.	66.5	68	66.5	68	3,674,900
90.5	41	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	88	90.5	88	90	1,743,300
12.75	7.1	Manila Water Co. Inc.	12.25	12.75	12.25	12.5	7,531,800
115	14	Manila Electric Co. "A"	104	115	104	113	1,700,030
116	21	Manila Electric Co. "B"	105	116	105	115	4,578,290
6.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	5.5	5.6	5.4	5.6	28,358,000
5.8	3.55	Petron Corp.	5.4	5.6	5.4	5.4	4,906,000
2.5	1.6	Salcon Power Corp.	2.1	2.18	2.1	2.18	70,000
1.9	0.91	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.5	1.52	565,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
5.9	2.85	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9	10,000
2.95	1.88	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.36	2.36	492,000
2.75	1.24	CADP Group Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.84	1.84	1,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26	26.5	26	26.5	7,000
61	30	Jollibee Foods Corp.	53	54	52.5	52.5	1,193,500
7.3	4.6	Pancake House Inc.	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	410,000
1.9	0.77	RFM Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	460,000
4.05	2.2	Roxas Holdings	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.7	390,000
80	61	San Miguel Corp. "A"	75	75	74	75	318,200
88	69.5	San Miguel Corp. "B"	80.5	82	80.5	82	1,207,100
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	18.75	18.75	18.5	18.75	3,545,000
0.49	0.19	Vitarich Corp.	0.38	0.49	0.38	0.49	12,400,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.35	EEI Corp.	5.7	6.1	5.5	5.8	7,961,000
4.6	1.06	Fortune Cement Corp.	4	4	4	4	10,000
9.2	4.2	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8	8.1	7.8	8	1,878,000
7	1.2	Republic Cement Corp.	5.3	5.5	5.2	5.5	331,000
2	0.245	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.74	1.78	1.74	1.78	8,646,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	1.42	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.7	1,598,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.22	1.28	1.22	1.26	208,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
7	5.1	Panasonic Manufacturing Phils. Corp.	7	7	7	7	2,000
0.44	0.0625	Picop Resources Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.35	0.35	6,760,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.74	A. Soriano Corp.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	101,000
0.17	0.022	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.145	0.145	66,320,000
1.28	0.18	APC Group Inc.	1.08	1.16	1.08	1.14	56,771,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2	2.08	2	2	1,695,000
3.3	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	2.2	2.2	2	2	110,000
0.018	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	29,000,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	8.5	8.6	8.3	8.4	17,521,000
0.021	0.007	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.017	0.017	135,400,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.9	6	5.7	5.9	22,423,000
1.38	0.47	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.06	1.06	681,000
1.5	0.085	Asia Amalgamated Holdings Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	13,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.44	2.44	2.4	2.42	3,969,000
5.6	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc.	4.15	4.15	4	4	98,000
16	4.5	Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc. "A"	9.3	9.3	9.3	9.3	1,000
590	283.33	Ayala Corp.	545	545	540	545	561,350
13	5.96	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	12.5	13	12.5	13	182,400
6.9	0.7	Balabac Resources and Holdings Co. Inc.	4.65	4.65	4.55	4.55	413,000
5.4	1	Benpres Holdings Corp.	5.1	5.4	5.1	5.3	33,637,000
9.8	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	9.1	9.6	9.1	9.4	7,094,000
2.02	0.7	F and J Prince Holdings Corp. "A"	2	2.02	2	2	160,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	7.5	7.5	7.2	7.2	2,593,000
3.55	1.16	House of Investments Inc.	2.95	3.1	2.95	3	202,000
14.5	5.6	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.25	12.5	106,700
2.6	0.95	Keppel Philippines Holdings Inc. "A"	2.3	2.3	2.16	2.3	31,000
0.8	0.185	MEDCO Holdings Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.5	0.5	610,000
0.95	0.1	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.73	0.81	0.73	0.78	260,000
30	0.88	Magnum Holdings Inc.	24	24.25	22.75	23.5	885,100
11.5	0.25	Multitech Investments Corp.	9.5	9.6	8.9	9.1	4,526,000
5.4	1.2	PAL Holdings Inc.	4.4	4.6	4.3	4.35	1,808,000
0.038	0.009	Pacifica Inc. "A"	0.033	0.033	0.031	0.032	115,200,000
1.54	0.8	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.02	1.02	1	1.02	208,000
0.75	0.16	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.57	0.57	810,000
432.5	200.44	SM Investments Corp.	425	425	422.5	425	95,700
0.73	0.115	Sinophil Corp.	0.57	0.6	0.57	0.58	22,760,000
1.06	0.51	Solid Group Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.83	0.83	200,000
1.6	0.78	South China Resources Inc.	1.46	1.5	1.4	1.5	629,000
2	0.8	Vivant Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	3,000
0.75	0.08	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.56	0.57	0.52	0.54	26,170,000
1.1	0.155	Zeus Holdings Inc.	0.87	0.87	0.7	0.7	250,000
		PROPERTY					
2.16	0.75	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	50,000
1.06	0.3	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	120,000
19.25	9.17	Ayala Land Inc.	17.75	17.75	17.25	17.5	34,666,800
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.68	1.72	1.68	1.7	6,889,000
4.7	1.86	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.3	4.6	4.3	4.6	396,000
2.9	1	Cityland Development Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.8	280,000
0.85	0.26	Crown Equities Inc.	0.78	0.85	0.77	0.83	38,990,000
0.83	0.17	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.56	0.56	10,960,000
3.25	0.72	Edsa Properties Holdings Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	50,000
0.99	0.44	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.86	0.88	0.85	0.86	29,930,000
0.32	0.032	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.28	0.28	65,280,000
1.38	0.38	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.12	3,680,000
2.44	0.98	Filinvest Land Inc.	2.18	2.18	2.14	2.16	88,896,000
0.41	0.0525	Gotesco Land Inc. "A"	0.41	0.41	0.32	0.35	15,740,000
0.42	0.07	Gotesco Land Inc. "B"	0.42	0.42	0.33	0.35	8,380,000
3.3	2.16	Highlands Prime Inc.	2.95	3.1	2.95	3	1,295,000
0.016	0.005	Interport Resources Corp. "B"	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	100,000
2.2	0.74	Keppel Philippines Properties Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	52,000
0.69	0.2	Kuok Phil. Properties Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.46	0.46	2,700,000
1.12	0.18	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.97	0.98	0.95	0.95	5,010,000
4.4	1.28	Megaworld Corp.	4.05	4.05	3.95	4	50,761,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.4	4.45	4.4	4.45	31,000
0.7	0.1	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.5	0.55	3,100,000
0.87	0.25	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.67	0.68	0.66	0.66	6,150,000
9.2	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	7	7.4	6.8	7	716,000
23	9.7	Robinson Land Corp.	19.5	19.75	19.5	19.5	4,517,800
5.7	1.23	SM Development Corp.	5.5	5.6	5.5	5.6	8,097,000
12	5.84	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.5	12	11.5	11.75	4,257,300
1.34	0.51	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	1	1.02	0.98	1	2,870,000
0.36	0.06	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.29	0.29	6,710,000
7.4	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	6.9	7.4	6.9	7.2	5,864,000
		MEDIA					
34	14.25	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	32	32	31	31	76,700
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.16	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.56	1.6	1.56	1.58	841,000
1,445.00	900	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,360.00	1,360.00	1,345.00	1,355.00	129,960
2,820.00	1,725.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,670.00	2,680.00	2,640.00	2,650.00	217,590
7.9	3.2	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.6	6.9	6.6	6.9	4,009,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.28	0.3	30,620,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	11	11	10.25	11	60,000
7.6	2	IPVG Corp.	7.1	7.2	6.9	7	1,930,000
0.065	0.0274	ISM Communications Corp.	0.05	0.05	0.047	0.048	66,500,000
2.9	1.8	Ionics Inc.	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.3	10,000
0.185	0.04	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.135	0.14	0.13	0.135	27,950,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.0625	0.0625	0.06	0.0625	73,900,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	4	4	3.15	3.25	8,984,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.92	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.74	1.74	1.7	1.7	564,000
6.8	2.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	5.9	6	5.9	5.9	1,069,000
32	13.25	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	29	30	28.5	28.5	1,174,400
2.14	0.86	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	2.06	2.1	2.06	2.1	235,000
1.74	0.8	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.64	1.72	1.6	1.7	517,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
16.5	3.8	Acesite (Phils.) Hotel Corp.	6	6	6	6	3,000
4.25	1.26	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.75	3.75	3.7	3.7	410,000
5.2	2.7	Manila Jockey Club Inc.	5	5	5	5	19,000
4.55	2.8	Philippine Racing Club Inc.	4	4	4	4	12,000
0.98	0.18	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.75	0.75	200,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.93	0.96	0.93	0.96	30,000
		EDUCATION					
9.8	7.2	Centro Escolar University	7.9	8	7.9	8	12,000
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc.	3.3	3.35	3.3	3.3	140,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
5.3	1.88	Macroasia Corp.	4.9	4.9	4.85	4.85	1,378,000
17.25	13	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	15.75	15.75	15.5	15.5	436,800
30	9.9	Paxys Inc.	24.5	24.75	24.5	24.75	1,453,500
		MINING					
0.018	0.0075	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.015	0.016	0.015	0.015	417,900,000
7.6	3	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.7	341,000
7.7	3	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	5.9	6	5.9	5.9	53,000
21.25	7.4	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	15.75	16.25	15.75	16.25	2,667,600
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. "A"	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	15,000
5	1.7	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	4.05	4.05	4.05	4.05	6,000
3.05	0.0646	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.55	2.65	31,913,000
0.35	0.215	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.28	33,120,000
0.42	0.225	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.34	0.34	0.31	0.31	7,430,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.034	0.034	0.033	0.033	142,400,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035	31,400,000
0.024	0.008	Omico Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.019	96,000,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.4	5.5	5.3	5.4	7,019,000
29.5	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	28.5	29	28.5	29	412,100
1.36	0.33	United Paragon Mining Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	672,000
1.8	0.5	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.32	1.36	1.3	1.34	4,586,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.47	0.47	0.44	0.45	2,910,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.023	0.023	0.022	0.022	117,100,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.023	0.023	0.022	0.022	84,200,000
14.25	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10.25	10.25	10	10	85,500
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.023	0.023	0.022	0.023	140,700,000

BY INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK

Cash growth slowed in May, BSP reports

Regulator keeps rosy outlook on inflation

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE CENTRAL BANK'S FEARS OF AN ACceleration in price increases eased yesterday after data revealed a slowdown in the growth of cash sloshing around in the economy.

At the same time, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Amando M. Tetangco Jr. said that the decision of the US Federal Reserve to keep its own key interest rates unchanged gave local monetary planners more room to keep domestic borrowing costs relatively low.

More importantly, however, domestic liquidity numbers released yesterday validated the central bank's decision to refrain from cutting its overnight rates further at the height of calls for lower interest rates in the first quarter of 2007.

"Our outlook for inflation continues to be favorable and there are early indications that the monetary measures we put in place in early May are achieving the desired effects," Tetangco said in a text message to reporters.

The BSP chief was referring to money supply data for May, which showed that domestic liquidity growth slowed down to 21.1 percent on a year-on-year basis from the 26.6-percent annual increase in April.

Money supply or domestic liquidity represents all the cash and liquid assets circulating in the local financial system.

Rapid money supply growth contributes directly to higher prices as more money chases after a limited amount of goods and services, prompting price increases.

The central bank expects the June inflation rate to come in between 2.2 percent and 2.9 percent.

It presently stands at an average of 2.7 percent for the first five months of the year.

The May money supply numbers signify the first time that the growth rate slowed down since February 2007 when the rate dropped to 22.4 percent from the previous month's 22.8 percent.

"Growth in the net foreign assets of depository corporations continued to drive [money supply], albeit at a slower pace of 32.6 percent from 37.9 percent in April," the central bank said in a statement.

Net domestic assets also posted a decelerating growth trend at 6.4 percent from 12.5 percent in the previous month.

"In particular, growth in credit to the public sector slowed down to 11.8 percent from 18.2 percent during the same period," the central bank added.

This was partly offset by the continued expansion in credit to the private sector, which rose by 5.8 percent from 5.2 percent, as lending to entities other than financial corporations was sustained during the month.

BSP's stance was boosted by developments in the world's largest economy where the US Fed kept interest rates unchanged at 5.25 percent.

"The broadly expected Fed decision to leave rates unchanged gives us some flexibility in our own rate setting," Tetangco said.

BSP's own overnight borrowing rate—closely followed by banks for pricing their own commercial loans—stands at 7.5 percent.

Anchor Land to invest ₱2.8B in condominium projects

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PROPERTY FIRM ANCHOR Land Holdings Inc. will spend P2.8 billion for two major condominium projects to take advantage of the robust growth in the property market.

Company vice chair Steve Li said in a briefing that P2 billion will be spent on Mandarin Square, a 39-story condominium on a 2,300-square meter lot in Binondo, Manila.

Mandarin Square will be completed by 2009.

"We have a strong belief that the growth in the property market is sustainable for more than three years," Li said.

Li said another project, Mayfair Tower, will be completed in 2008 and will cost roughly P800 million to build.

The 33-story structure will rise on a 1,000-square meter site on UN Avenue in Manila.

Mayfair Tower will target overseas Filipino workers and expatriates.

Mayfair Tower has a fitness center, clubhouse, pool areas, sunken bar, lounge, wellness center with two saunas and shower rooms, a pond as well as waterfalls and jogging path.

Li said shareholders of Anchor Land were willing to infuse additional capital into the company to fund more projects.

Anchor Land is a multinational real estate company with several projects in China.

Its first luxury condominium project in the Philippines under Anchor Properties Corporation (APC) is the Lee Tower in Binondo.

Anchor Land has a pending application with the Philippine Stock Exchange for an initial public offering.

Anchor Land aims to raise anywhere between P300 million and P500 million from the sale of shares.

The proceeds will be used to acquire more land.

The company has managed to double its earnings last year to P56 million, from P24 million the previous year.

Big banks lending more to small, medium firms

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S ROBUST growth in the first quarter has encouraged big banks to increase lending to small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs).

Aurelio Montinola III, president of Bank of the Philippine Islands, said in a briefing that the growth in lending to SMEs this year might even be higher than the growth in lending to large companies because of the growing interest in the sector.

"SMEs are the most risky (to lend to) if the economy is deteriorating, but quite attractive if the economy is improving. SME is an industry that banks are now focusing on," Montinola said.

Small firms are defined as having assets worth between P150,000 and P15 million, while medium-scale firms have assets worth P15 million to P100 million.

He said that in the case of BPI, the bank plans to increase its lending to the SME sector by 12 percent this year.

He said that BPI has lent P46 billion to SMEs so far this year, still quite small as a percentage of its estimated loan portfolio of P220 billion to P240 billion as of June 28.

Montinola said areas that have been boosting BPI's growth so far included consumer lending, which includes housing and car loans, bancassurance and overseas banking.

He said that this year, BPI expects lending to SMEs to contribute more to BPI's income.

Jesus Tambunting, chair of Planters Bank, agreed that banks were allocating more resources for SMEs.

Tambunting added banks are also providing other forms of assistance to the SMEs, such as helping them properly keep accounting books.

Tambunting said Planters Bank, for its part, will launch an industrial park for SMEs in Cebu on July 11.

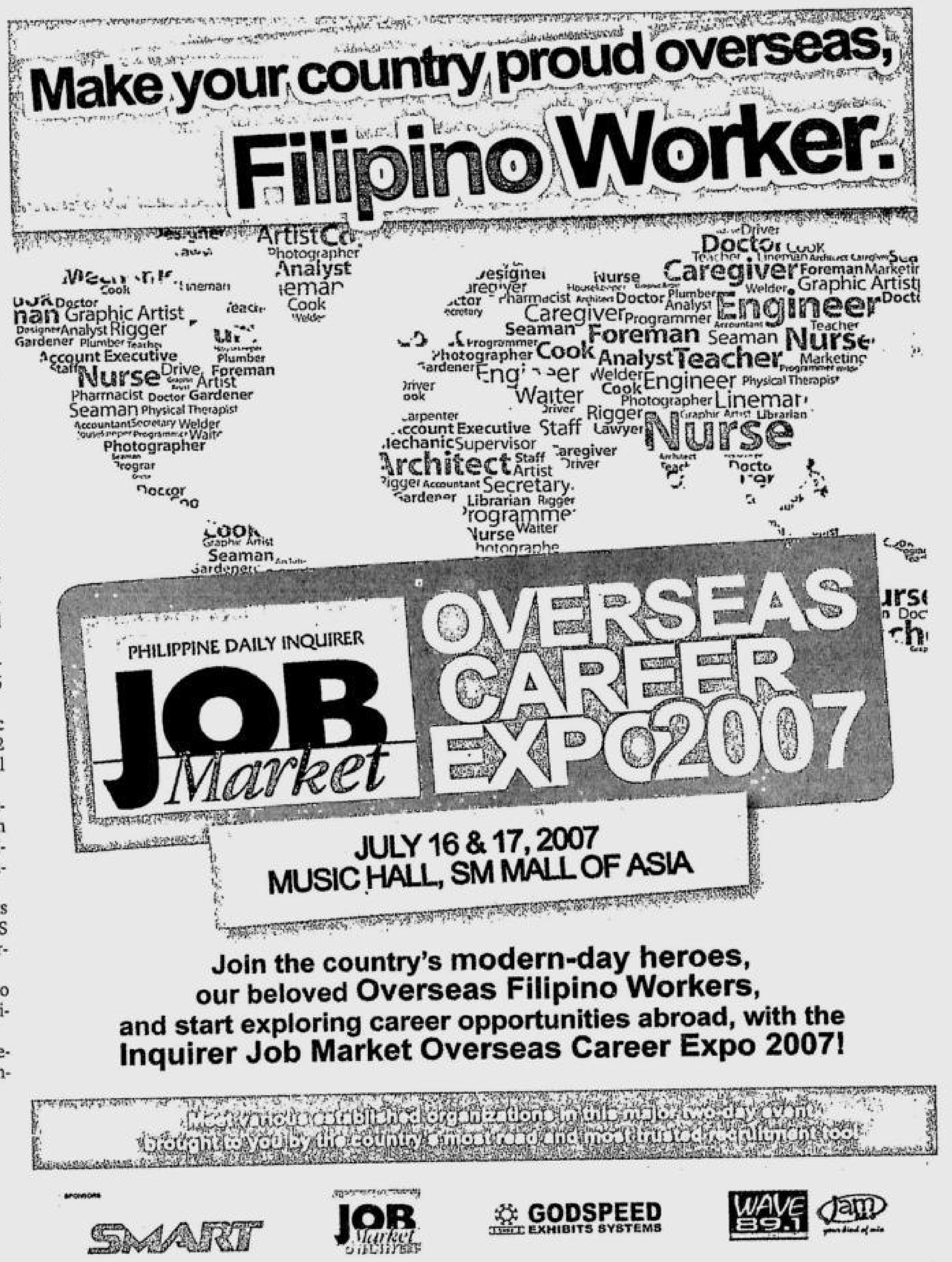
Planters Bank has invested some P270 million to put up the industrial park, which he said had been declared an economic zone by the government.

Julie Yap-Chua, senior vice president of Banco de Oro, said in the same briefing that she likewise sees increased lending to the SME sector.

She said, however, that banks should make sure that the SMEs would not end up with more loans than they can handle.

Yap-Chua said that SMEs currently account for about 17 percent of the loan portfolio of Banco de Oro, one of the companies controlled by the family of retail tycoon Henry Sy Sr.

Banco de Oro started out by lending to the mall tenants and suppliers of the SM group, but has expanded to cover other firms.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Intel equates success with improving people's lives

CORPORATE CITIZEN

For workers, volunteerism is a vital part of life at Intel

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

HIS COLLEAGUES REFER TO Rene del Rosario as "Dracula" because he is always on the prowl for blood—not for himself, but for the sick in need of a transfusion.

He goes around looking for blood donors, and has recently sacrificed some of his weekends and days off for environment-related activities, like planting trees for future generations to enjoy.

Del Rosario is just one of 4,000 employees of Intel Corp. who generously volunteer their time and effort to engage in outreach programs, revolving around the environment, education and community.

Volunteerism is an inextricable part of life of employees at Intel in the Philippines, which has the distinction of having the highest volunteer participation rate among the countries where Intel operates.

The global average stands at 38 percent, compared to 80 percent for Intel in the Philippines.

At Intel Philippines, four of five employees are part of the Intel Involved volunteerism program and the company provides both financial and moral support.

Matching volunteer work

One of the major volunteer programs in the Philippines is the Volunteer Matching Grant Program, under which Intel Foundation provides $50 for every 20 hours of volunteer work that an Intel employee renders in a public school.

Ma. Teresa L. Pacis, Intel external communications manager, said that Intel Philippines raised P16 million for the public schools last year from the grant matching program.

Intel is confident that this year will not be any different because the volunteer patronage for the year has already exceeded 50 percent as of June, with total volunteer hours for all projects hitting close to 140,000 hours.

Over 2,600 employees have provided their time and talent to different activities—such as the World Environment Day celebration, the Back to School Program and Brigada Eskwela—especially in areas close to Intel's testing and assembly site in General Trias, Cavite.

INTEL employees come together to put a smile on the face of a public school student.

PROGRAMS to protect the environment are a key part of Intel's community program.

Book and blood drive

Volunteer programs in the pipeline include a book and blood drive, an international coastal clean-up, school solid waste management and recycling, and reading programs and Science-Math month activities.

But it is not just the communities that benefit from the volunteer work—the employees gain, too.

"I have gained a lot of skills from my experiences, and I have developed my leadership skills," Del Rosario says in a statement.

"I now know more about organizing and mobilizing people, especially during events," Del Rosario adds in Filipino. "My English is still not that good, but I am no longer shy speaking in English."

Volunteerism has been a part of Intel's corporate culture ever since it started operations in Makati in 1972, said Pacis.

The program conforms to the microchip processing company's vision to be a partner in development.

It was in 2005 when Intel went for a more focused approach to corporate responsibility, which it defines as achieving business success "while operating with dignity, strengthening the communities around it, and improving people's lives through technology."

Starting in 2006, Intel has focused on the environment, education and the community because the company believes that these are "most material" to its corporate responsibility efforts.

And being a good corporate citizen, it started within the company's boundaries.

In the area of environment, Intel said it had recycled 72 percent of its solid waste and has partnered with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to transform its hazardous waste into alternative fuel.

"This is another first in the country and among Intel sites in Asia," said Intel site managing director Michael Wentling in a report.

Forefront of technology

Since Intel is at the forefront of technology, its education programs revolve around using the latest in technology to improve math, science and engineering education.

"We also advocate for the importance of teaching key 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving and collaboration," Wentling added. "We partner with educators, government agencies and students all over the Philippines, to make technology more available, accessible and effective."

But it is in the General Trias community where Intel has made the biggest impact as the company has taken it upon itself to "help make General Trias a better place to live."

In so doing, Intel makes the company a better place to work in.

Asean eyes dev't of nuclear power in region

By Abigail L. Ho

IN REVIEWING VIABLE Alternatives to fossil fuels, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations now wants to convene a formal forum to discuss the use of nuclear resources in generating power.

According to Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla, Asean member-nations are still keen on keeping the region a nuclear weapons-free zone, but they have become more interested in exploring the nuclear option to power generation.

Indonesia and Vietnam, in fact, have already expressed interest in setting up nuclear power plants in the very near future, he added.

"Asean member-nations aim to keep the region nuclear weapons-free, but they are not prohibiting peaceful uses of nuclear power," Lotilla said.

Here in the Philippines, he said, firms of various nationalities have approached the DOE with proposals to help develop nuclear power.

"We don't want to ban the technology," Lotilla said. "We just want to come out with clear standards first."

In an earlier interview, Tokyo Electric Power Co. has committed to assist the country, should the government decide to go into nuclear power generation.

Toshiro Kudama of Tepco said the company's expertise in nuclear power generation would be useful to the country.

The country's first nuclear power venture could be a government-to-government deal, he said.

Tepco owns and operates 17 nuclear reactors—10 in the Fukushima prefecture and seven in Niigata Kashiwazaki Kariwa—with a total capacity of 17,308 megawatts.

Nuclear power is important to Japan since 80 percent of all its fuels are imported, Kudama said.

DA launches ₱100-M intercropping program for farmers

By Amy R. Remo

A P100-MILLION INTERCROPPING program is now underway to help more than 100,000 farmers recover from the damages caused by the spate of super typhoons that had hit the country late last year.

Under the program, coconut farmlands that had turned idle after being ravaged by storms would be planted with corn varieties.

"Under this cost-effective program, planting materials consisting of open pollinated white or yellow corn variety and complementary fertilizers like microbial inoculants are being distributed to identified farmer-beneficiaries," Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap said.

He added that this initiative is being carried out by the Philippine Coconut Authority in the provinces of Quezon, Oriental Mindoro, Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes and Sorsogon.

Yap said the intercropping program—which makes use of "cash crops" with short gestation periods, such as corn—would encourage farmers to plow idle coconut farmlands to supplement their incomes.

At the same time, intercropping would enhance soil fertility, enabling coconut trees to tap more nutrients from the ground and improve their fruit-bearing capacity.

Yap said the Department of Agriculture expects coconut production to remain flat this year at 2.1 million metric tons as a result of the damage wrought by supertyphoons Milenyo, Paeng and Reming in the second semester of 2006.

But because of the PCA's replanting, refertilization and rehabilitation programs this year, the coconut subsector is expected to post a turnaround.

Production is projected to rise from 2.4 million metric tons in 2008, all the way up to 3 million metric tons in 2010.

According to PCA Administrator Oscar Garin, the Coconut Industry Investment Fund Oil Mills Group has provided funding for the intercropping program, with additional funds coming from the Office of the President.

"We have learned that plowing of idle lands in coconut farms enhances soil aeration and fertility, which is a better alternative to the previous approach of fertilizing coconuts with nutrient input," Garin said. "Also, fertilization has proven unappealing to coconut farmers because it yielded no immediate results."

Garin also said that the intercropping strategy could lead to a 15-percent minimum increase in coconut productivity.

The strategy is considered to be cost-effective since each coconut farmer-beneficiary requires only P750 worth of intercropping inputs per hectare instead of P5,000 per hectare under the previous soil-fertilization method.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Maynila, Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project

Name of Project / Brief Description	Supply and delivery of 408 units PC Desktop with AVR per BSP's technical specifications
Approved Budget for the Contract	P 7,086,960.00
Delivery Period	Within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of Approved Contract

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar requirement awarded and completed within the last five (5) years (Y2002 to present) amounting to at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	Starting 29 June 2007
2. Pre-Bid Conference	06 July 2007, 3:00 PM
3. Opening of Bids	24 July 2007, 2:00 PM
4. Bid Evaluation	These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR)-A of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003
5. Post-qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P3,550.00 to the BSP Cashier.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.
Chairman

(PDI – June 30, 2007)

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
Republic of the Philippines
Mindanao Rural Development Project II
Proposed Concreting of Damaniog Bridge Approach
(Code No. 02-MSK-ShK-07)

1. The Government of the Philippines (GOP) *has applied* for a Loan from the World Bank toward the cost of Mindanao Rural Development Project II, and it intends to apply part or the whole of the proceeds of this Loan, together with the GOP counterpart funds, to payments under the contract for Concreting of Damaniog Bridge Approach, Code No. 02-MSK-ShK-07.
2. The *Municipality of Sultan Kudarat*, implementing partner of the Department of Agriculture, now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for *Proposed Concreting of Damaniog Bridge Approach.²* Completion of the Works is required by *86 Calendar Days.*
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Subject to exceptions stated in this Bidding Documents, only Bids from Bidders who pass an eligibility check will be opened. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded in the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.
4. The documents required in the Eligibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
5. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the Bids and Awards Committee and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Mondays to Fridays.
6. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of *Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00).* The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative on or before 9:00 AM on *August 13, 2007.*
7. The *Municipality of Sultan Kudarat* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders at 9:00 AM on *August 02, 2007* at the following address Mayor's Office Conference Hall, Sultan Kudarat, Shariff Kabunsuan.
8. Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address below on or before *August 14, 2007* at 9:00 A.M. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of cash, certified (manager's or cashier's) check, bank guarantee and in an amount specified in the bid documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on *August 14, 2007,* 9:00 AM at Mayor's Office Conference Hall, Sultan Kudarat, Shariff Kabunsuan. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representative who choose to attend at the address below at 9:00 a.m. on August 14, 2007.
9. The Municipality of Sultan Kudarat reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) RAMON J. AYSON
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee
Municipal Hall, Datumangcob, Sultan Kudarat, Shariff Kabunsuan 9605
(064) 429-0079; Telefax No. 064-429-0081

(PDI – June 30 & July 7, 2007)

Pilipinas Shell to open 50 new stations nationwide

AS COMPETITION FURTHER stiffens, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. is planning to add another 50 stations to its nationwide network and give existing ones a facelift.

The oil firm hopes to increase its 33-percent share of the retail market.

Sammy de Guzman, Shell's vice president for retail, said the oil firm would seesaw from the No. 1 and No. 2 spots in the retail market, giving up the top slot one month and regaining it the next.

This cycle, he said, has been going on for a long time, and Shell now wants to further strengthen its position in the market.

"We have 33 percent of the market in retail and, of course, we want to grow that," de Guzman said. "Competition is pretty close. But we still believe we're the market leader, not just in terms of volume or revenue, but in other metrics. We're the consumers' preferred brand."

To further boost the company's presence, he said Shell would be putting up 50 additional stations nationwide within the year, as part of its yearly investments.

He said the oil firm would also be reinvesting in its existing stations starting next semester.

"We're giving Shell stations a new face—something that's easier on the eyes," De Guzman said. "Our stations will have new features, they will be brighter. All our new stations will carry that new face."

For the initial phase of the project, he said, Shell will be changing the look of some 200 stations, mostly in Metro Manila.

The "facelift" will be carried out over the next couple of years.

"The Philippines is an important retail market for Shell around the globe and in Asia," he said.

This is why the oil firm is willing to invest in putting up new stations and in improving existing ones, he explained.

Apart from its retail stations, Shell is also focused on rolling out new products that will help boost its sales volumes.

The oil firm last Thursday launched fuels containing the fuel economy formula, which promised to help motorists achieve at least a 10-percent reduction in fuel consumption due to increased efficiency.

The new Shell fuel economy formula will be offered in the oil firm's Super Unleaded, Super Premium, Super Unleaded E10 and Diesoline Ultra products.

Abigail L. Ho

MARIANO MARCOS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL & MEDICAL CENTER

Reference # :
Procurement of Various Drugs & Medicines, Laboratory Supplies and Reagents, Med./Surgical, X-ray, Dental Supplies & Instruments and Medical Equipment
Brgy. #6 San Julian, Batac, Ilocos Norte

Standard Form Number: SF-GOOD-05
Revised on: July 28, 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **MARIANO MARCOS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL & MEDICAL CENTER – BATAC, ILOCOS NORTE**, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers / manufacturers / distributors / contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project : Procurement of Various Drugs and Medicines, Laboratory Supplies and Reagents Medical/Surgical, X-ray, Dental Supplies and Instruments and Medical Equipments.

Location : MMMH & MC, Brgy. # 6 San Julian, Batac, Ilocos Norte

Brief Description : Purchase of Various Drugs & Medicines, Laboratory Supplies & Reagents, Med./Surgical X-ray, Dental Supplies & Instruments and Medical Equipments used for daily maintenance and operations of the hospital.

Approved Budget For the Contract :

a.	Drugs and Medicines	=	P 30,402,000.00 (Revolving fund, Regular Fund
b.	Laboratory Supplies and and Reagents	=	P 10,048,144.54 (BDTF, Regular fund, Income)
c.	Med./Surgical, X-ray, Dental Supplies and Instruments	=	P 7,470,806.52 (Regular Fund, Income, Hemo TF)
d.	Medical Equipments	=	P 15,390,000.00 (Income, Medicare Trust Fund)

Contract Duration : 180 days
Delivery Period . September 2007 to February 2008

For contracts involving delivery of goods:

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last (state number of years, minimum 21) with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	July 9 – 23, 2007
2. Pre-bid Conference	July 11, 2007 @ 2:00 P.M.
3. Submission of Letters of Intent and Application for Eligibility *(If single-stage bidding is used, delete this activity)* ; Pre-eligibility Checking	July 9 – 23, 2007
4. Opening of Bids	July 25 – 27, 2007 @ 2:00 P.M.
5. Bid Evaluation	July 31 to August 13, 2007
6. Post-qualification	August 14 – 20, 2007
7. Notice of Award	August 24 to September 2007

For single-stage bidding:

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **Php 3,000.00 to the MMH and MC Cashier.**

The Mariano Marcos Memorial Hospital & Medical Center assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **LOUIE A. GUERRERO, M.D., FPCR**
BAC Chairman

(PDI – June 23 & 30, 2007)

TARLAC II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

San Nicolas, Concepcion, Tarlac

INVITATION TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the supply and delivery of requirements needed for the installation of Distribution Transformer intended for sole users, stated below are hereby invited to pre-qualify with Tarlac II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (TARELCO II). Only pre-qualified applicants shall be invited to participate in the bidding.

BIDDING OF DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMER

1. Transformer, Distribution, 1 – Ph, 25 KVA, 7620 / 13200 V GYPW, 14 units 240V SW, Oil Immersed, Self Cooled, 60 Hz, Conventional, Double Bushing, Brand New, PCB Free, Preferred Brands: Philec, Wagner, Cooper, Hanyang with Standard Losses Requirements.
2. Same as Item No. 1 except 15 KVA, 240 V SW — 4 units
3. Same as Item No. 1 except 37.5 KVA, 240 V SW — 4 units
4. Same as Item No. 1 except 50 KVA, 240 V SW — 4 units

NOTE : Manufacturers / Suppliers are required to submit the following documents to qualify:

a. Manufacturer's affidavit authorizing a named representative to offer its product.
b. Manufacturer's Product Warranty and After Sales Certificates
c. Importation documents with proof of payment of taxes and duties
d. Quality Test report / certificate

Pre-qualification documents shall be received from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM by the Pre-qualification, Bids and Awards Committee through its Chairman, MS. MARILOU N. VERGARA, at TARELCO II Main Office Building located at San Nicolas, Concepcion, Tarlac, Philippines.

Submission of Pre-qualification Documents – **July 02-06, 2007**
Bid Documents are available beginning – **July 09-12, 2007**
Date and Time of Pre-bid Conference – **July 12, 2007 at 1:30 p.m.**

Date and Time of Bidding shall be announced during the Pre-bid Conference.

Accredited suppliers previously pre-qualified need only to update their files with TARELCO II.

A Bid Bond of at least 2.5% of Total Bid Price is required, either in form of Cash, Manager's or Cashier's Check or Surety Bond.

TARELCO II reserves the right to reject any and all applications to pre-qualify and to bid without offering any reason, and waive any defect therein. TARELCO II reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

Additional information shall be furnished upon request. Send all communications to the PBAC Secretariat at the address mentioned above or at Telephone No. (045) 923-0460 or Fax No. (045) 923-0471 & 609-0224.

(Sgd.) **MARILOU N. VERGARA**
PBAC Chairman

(PDI–June 27 & 30, 2007)

More Classified Ads

Department of National Defense	A11
Social Security System	A17
Development Bank of the Philippines	A17
Home Guaranty Corporation	A17
Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital	A17
National Transmission Corporation	A24
Department of Labor-NCR	A24
Commission on Elections	A28 & 29
Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas	B4
Municipality of Sultan Kudarat	B4

OBITUARIES

DEATH NOTICE

Leonora Sarmiento
Died on June 26 at the age of 92.

Her body lies at Rizal Funeral Parlor, Pasay City.

Interment will be today, June 30 after the 9 a.m. Mass at Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque.

ENRIQUETA "PAQUITA" M. ALMEDA

Retired teacher of Pateros Elementary School
Retired Sales Counselor of GMMP, Inc.

peacefully joined our Lord on June 29, 2007 at the age of 94.

Her sister, **JOSEFA** (†); brothers **ALFREDO** and wife **DORIS** (†), **BENJAMIN** (†) and wife **AQUILINA** (†), **ERNESTO** (†) and wife **JUANITA** and **RUSTICO** (†); nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for her eternal happiness in heaven.

Her body lies in state at Chapel 1, Garden of Memories Memorial Chapels, Pateros, Metro Manila.

Interment will be on Sunday, **July 1, 2007** at the Garden of Memories Memorial Park after the celebration of the 10:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

JOB HIRING

POSITIONS

- MANAGING DIRECTOR
- ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER
- DEPUTY MANAGER FOR ADMINISTRATION
- DEPUTY MANAGER FOR HUMAN RESOURCES
- DEPUTY MANAGER ACCOUNTING
- PROCUREMENT MANAGER
- DEPUTY MANAGER PROCUREMENT
- DEPUTY MANAGER CUSTOMS
- DEPUTY MANAGER FOR SUBCONTRACT
- ENGINEERING MANAGER
- SENIOR DESIGN ENGINEER
- PRINCIPAL DESIGN ENGINEER
- MANAGER FOR QUALITY CONTROL
- MANAGER FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE
- SHIP DESIGN ENGINEER
- MANAGER FOR PRODUCTION OUTFITTING
- MANAGER FOR PRODUCTION HULL
- MANAGER FOR BUDGET AND PLANNING
- MANAGER FOR FACILITY
- MANAGER FOR GENERAL AFFAIR
- MANAGER FOR SAFETY
- MANAGER FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
- ASSISTANT MANAGER FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
- SENIOR TRAINER
- ASSISTANT MANAGER FOR TRAINING CENTER
- TRAINING INSTRUCTOR
- ASSEMBLY AND FABRICATION MANAGER
- DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR
- DEPUTY MANAGER FOR PRODUCTION

QUALIFICATIONS

- GRADUATE OF ENGINEERING OR BUSINESS COURSE
- HIGHLY COMPUTER LITERATE
- MUST BE FAMILIAR WITH AUTOCAD PROGRAM
- MUST KNOW HOW TO SPEAK KOREAN AND ENGLISH FLUENTLY
- WITH 10-15 YEARS SHIP BUILDING EXPERIENCE
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Makati:
892-5578; 811-4361;
811-4370
Kalaw:
528-0213; 527-3342
Megamall:
635-0219; 635-0220

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education (DepEd)
SECONDARY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (SEDIP)
National Project Management Office (NPMO)
5th Floor, Bonifacio Building, DepEd Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City
Telephone Nos. 635-98-22; 631-0673; Telefax No. 635-9826

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date : June 25, 2007
Loan No. : PH-P200
IFB No. : SEDIP-2007-EQPT-JBIC

1. The Republic of the Philippines through the Department of Education (DepED) has received a loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) in Japanese Yen towards financing the cost of the Secondary Education Development and Improvement Project (SEDIP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contracts for the Supply and Delivery of School Equipment to Selected Secondary Schools in the Philippines.
2. The DepED through the Bids and Awards Committee III (BAC III), invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Supply and Delivery of School Equipment to Selected Secondary Schools following the schedule below:

Equipment Package	Issuance of Bidding Documents	Date of Bid Opening
A. Lot 1, General Science, Lot 2, Biology and Lot 3, Chemistry Equipment	Starting on July 9, 2007	August 23, 2007
B. Lot 1, Industrial Arts Equipment: Sub-Lot A (5 items) Rebid		

3. Bidders are required to submit bid for the complete items comprising a lot or sub-lot. A bidder may opt to submit bids for one (1) or more lots.
4. For the purpose of this bid, eligible bidders shall be those who have the experience in selling, supply, delivery and distribution of school equipment to remote areas.
5. Interested eligible bidders may inspect and obtain the bidding documents at the SEDIP-NPMO Procurement Unit, Room 504 Bonifacio Building, DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City with Tel. Nos. (632) 632-0456 and 637-5833. Information is also available at **http://www.deped.gov.ph;http// www.procurementservice.org** or **http://ww.sedip.ph**
6. Complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders starting on the date indicated in paragraph 2 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (PhP 2,000.00) in cash for each equipment package.
7. All bids shall be submitted together with the required bid security of not less than 2% of the total bid amount on the date indicated in paragraph 2 not later than 10:00 am at the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal I Building, DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.
8. A pre-bid conference for the two (2) equipment packages shall be held at the venue indicated in paragraph 7 on July 23, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.
9. The DepED reserves the right to accept and reject any or all bids and to annul the bidding process at any time prior to award of contract without incurring any liabilities to the affected parties.

(Sgd.) **TERESITA G. INCIONG**
Assistant Secretary and Chairperson, BAC III

(PDI – June 29 & 30, 2007)

BJMPMBAI
Annual Membership Meeting
Occupational/Safety and Health Center Bldg.
North Avenue,
Diliman, Quezon City
9:00 AM, Wednesday
29 August 2007

Private Secondary School in Bulacan still needs

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OBITUARIES

Pedro "Pedring" Lat-Sancianco, M.D.

UST Medicine Class 1949
Former Director, Batangas Regional Hospital, 1965 - 1987
Former President, Batangas & Tanauan Medical Society
Former Chairman, Tanauan Water District

Has peacefully joined our Creator on June 28, 2007 at the age of 85.

A very loving husband to **Corazon Luancing** of Rosario, Batangas; a supportive father to his children **Evelyn "Baby" & Gene Olaes; Ato & Marivic Gonzales; Agnes & Nards Ablaza; Lito & Judith Lucido; Eddie & Ced Danan; Minnie & Lod Macaisa; Toots & Emi Trinidad; Doll & John Macatangay**; a generous and loving grandfather to his grandchildren **Christine, Robbie & Donna; Mon, Jit & Beth; Carlo, Anne, Jill & Erwin; Angelo & Arnel; Kathleen & Peter; Nico & Ton; Rafael, Gabe & Migs; Anna & Hans**; and great-grandson **Enzo.**

His remains lie in state at the Sancianco Residence at 110 Sixto Castillo St., Tanauan City, Batangas.

Interment will be on Monday, July 2, 2007, 1:00 p.m. at the St. John the Evangelist Church, Tanauan City, Batangas.

SCIENCE/HEALTH

E-mail: pr_science_health@inquirer.com.ph
Text us your feedback: inquirer hea name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)
Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

Fund drive vs childhood cancer intensified

By Charles E. Buban

CANCER STRIKES people of all ages and yet, it takes on a whole new dimension whenever it occurs in young children who have limited understanding of their condition and who often find their treatment regimen traumatic.

Each year some 3,500 children in the Philippines are diagnosed with cancer.

Although there are treatment approach available that could potentially cure 50 to 80 percent of these children, Dr. Julius Lecciones of the Philippine Society of Pediatric Oncology (an organization of medical professionals who treat children with cancer) laments that in reality, 80 to 90 percent of these children are expected to die of the disease.

"This is because two-thirds of these children are being diagnosed with cancer either in the late clinical stages when cure is no longer possible, or in advanced stages when long-term survival is possible only with intensive and expensive treatment regimens that are available only in hospitals in Manila," he said.

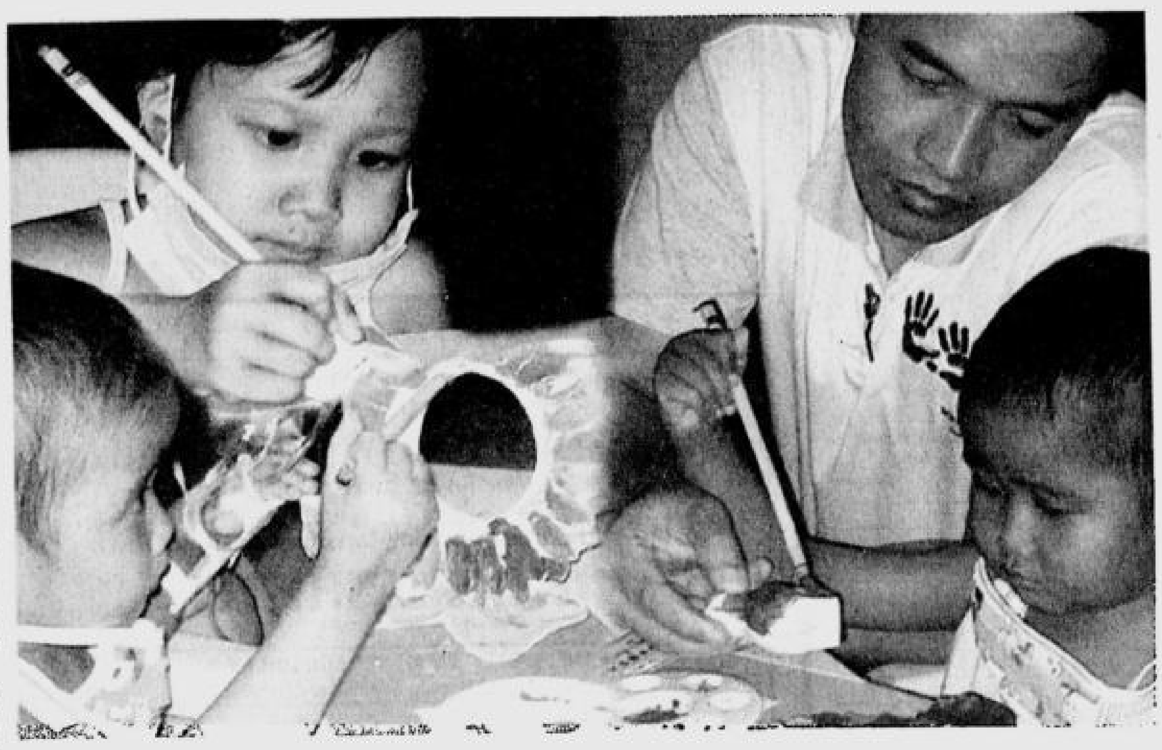
There is hope

However, the doctor who is also the executive director of the Philippine Children's Medical Center in Quezon City, believes there is hope as what he has outlined in a project proposal called the Philippine CanServe Project, which won last year a 50,000-euro grant (roughly P3.12 million) from the International Union Against Cancer (UICC) and sanofi-aventis.

The UICC is the only international nongovernmental organization dedicated exclusively to the global control of cancer while sanofi-aventis is European Union's largest pharmaceutical company and the world's third largest.

The Philippine CanServe Project identified retinoblastoma (cancer of the retina) and lymphocytic leukemia (a slowly progressive form of cancer of the blood cells) as the most common types of cancer (accounting for up to 60 percent) in children in the Philippines.

With this project, Lecciones aims to improve the oncology training of medical personnel outside the major cities to introduce disciplined use of standard treatment protocols and to develop a nationwide data collection system to help pinpoint where further improvements in cancer care are needed.



A NUMBER of children benefiting from the Philippine CanServe Project include those confined at the Philippine Children's Medical Center in Quezon City.

Aside from the PSPO, the project also partnered with Project: Brave Kids, a private organization that supports over 100 families being treated at the Philippine Children's Medical Center and sanofi-aventis Philippines.

Additional funding

Lecciones informed that the project early this year, received additional funding when sanofi-aventis beefed up its existing grant by providing another 20,000 euros (about P1.25 million).

With fresh funding Philippine CanServed Project got into high gear, this time by providing training and education to the so-called "frontline physicians," who include general practitioners, family physicians and general pediatricians in PSPO's five regional centers (La Union, Pampanga, Batangas, Iloilo, Cebu and Davao).

These frontline physicians, according to Lecciones, will be trained to be more scrutinizing to their young patients by conducting further tests just to rule out cancer.

"Doctors should be more careful considering that most of the symptoms of cancer in children can be interpreted as common child ailments—iron deficiency could easily be attributed to a child looking anemic and not acute lymphocytic leukemia at its early stage or a child who keeps on bumping and slipping on mere carelessness and not retinoblastoma," Lecciones explained.

Symptoms

According to him, although there are different types of cancer, at least 85 percent of cancers in children have common signs and symptoms that parents should watch out for: unexplained weight loss and fever, pallor, headaches (often early morning vomiting), unusual swelling and abdominal mass, excessive bruising or bleeding, white glow in the eye, and sudden changes in balance or behavior.

He added that about 50 to 80 percent of children with retinoblastoma and acute lymphocytic leukemia are potentially curable.

He said: "These cancers in children progress rapidly, however, a quick but accurate diagnosis greatly improves the chances that the child will survive and live an active and productive life. With this awareness campaign and the continuing support of our stakeholders, we hope to make a difference in saving more children against this tough yet beatable disease.

Coughing may make heart attacks worse

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

LAST WEEK, I RAN A FORWARDED e-mail on how strong coughing can help the blood circulate and the heart maintain its rhythm, so a person suffering from a heart attack can have enough time to the go the hospital. I had consulted a doctor who said that he saw no harm in the method, since strong coughing can keep oxygen circulating in the heart. He also advised diet and exercise as prevention against heart attacks.

However, I received a cautionary e-mail from reader Jean Mavi [jmavi21@yahoo.com], who called my attention to the Urban Legends website Snopes [www.snopes.com/medical/homecure/coughcpr.asp]. According to the website, strong coughing can only be used if the patient is well-versed in the procedure. If not, it may make things worse. Since most of us are not experienced in this, it is best for us not to try this at all.

The method, called cough cardiopulmonary resuscitation, is not new. According to Snopes, it has been used successfully in emergency cases where patients were about to faint and knew exactly how to cough to prevent losing consciousness, or by patients who were under the care of doctors who knew how to instruct them well in the method.

But this may usually not be the case for most of us. For those who are having a mild heart attack or some palpitations, this method may make the situation worse. The website concludes, "The procedure might be the right thing to attempt or it might be the very thing that would kill the afflicted depending on which sort of cardiac crisis is being experienced. Without a doctor there to judge the situation, and if cough CPR is indicated, to supervise the rhythmic coughing, the procedure is just far too risky for a layman to attempt."

I consulted another doctor. At first he was enthusiastic about the coughing method, but when I asked him to look at the Snopes site, he admitted that its recommendations made sense.

Aspirin may work

What to do then? Snopes recommends taking aspirin on the onset of chest pains. Aspirin prevents blood clots from getting bigger, and has saved lives. (However, one doctor said that aspirin may not be beneficial for some people, such as those on blood thinners. The best way is still prevention, which means right diet and enough exercise.)

So the bottomline is: do not try the strong coughing method without the supervision of a doctor. If in doubt, do not try it at all. I thank Jean Mavi for informing me about this, and I apologize for whatever misinformation the writeup might have caused.

Cooking from kitchen wastes

According to Joy M. Lazcano of the Department of Science and Technology, common kitchen wastes can be used as gas for cooking. Since the cost of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) is rising today, why not turn to kitchen wastes?

Researchers at the Industrial Technology Development Institute have developed a cheap and environment-friendly portable biogas digester. Lazcano says that a drum can store up to 211 liters of biodegradable methods from kitchen wastes, leaves and animal manure. It can produce 350 liters of biogas for cooking, with similar efficiency to a regular LPG.

This method also reduces domestic garbage. Government data show that Metro Manila alone produces 600,000 tons of garbage every day. I hope this technology will be available soon.

* * *

Contact the author at blessbook@yahoo.com.

A Healthy Stomach Helps You Stay Fit

If you think that skipping meals is the easiest and fastest way to lose weight and avoid extra calories, think again. It can actually do the opposite!

Missing an important meal such as breakfast can make you consume more calories later in the day, because you are hungrier than you normally would be. The best way to manage calorie intake is to eat 4-6 small healthy meals throughout the day – specially foods that are rich in fiber.

Fiber adds volume to your meals without adding calories, and helps stave off hunger to keep you feeling full longer.

Make fiber a part of your regular daily diet by eating lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, substituting white bread with whole wheat bread, and having legumes and beans at least twice a week. And, it's best to take daily fiber supplements, to make sure you get the right amount of fiber your body needs everyday.

C-Lium Fibre is 100% natural soluble dietary fiber without artificial flavors, sweeteners, and preservatives. Made from 100% psyllium husk, C-Lium Fibre promotes a healthy digestive system that helps you stay fit. What's more, it helps lower cholesterol levels to prevent heart disease, and aids in blood sugar management. A daily dose of C-Lium Fibre also boosts fat absorption, relieves indigestion, and reduces acidity.

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Shrinking nature

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

IMAGINE THAT YOU'VE JUST HAD YOUR dream house built on a bare patch of land. Now you need plants to make the place a true home. Wandering through the plant nurseries and garden stores, you pick out the grass, the various flowering plants, possibly even a few giant pots and statues to accent the yard. All you have to do now is select the trees for shade, shelter and as a preventive measure against soil erosion.

As you examine the seedlings available and envision how they'd look against the house, however, you realize there are a few requirements to consider. The small lot means large trees will dwarf the whole space. Also, if they get too tall, the tree branches could get caught in the power lines and cause a brownout during a typhoon, to say nothing of damaging whatever the tree might fall actually on.

A solution

With apologies for the infomercial-like scenario, there is now a solution for those faced with something similar. Researchers led by Oregon State University's biotechnology program manager Elizabeth Etherington announced this week that they've found a way to grow trees that are at least 25 percent smaller than normal. Based on their data, in the "not-too-distant future," people might even be able to have trees made to order, specifying height, leaf color and even leaf shape.

The claims may sound farfetched, but the research to identify and use the genes that control tree size and form wasn't done on a whim. For incentive, consider the ever-increasing human population's continuing search for a space of their own. As explained in the journal Landscape Plant News, aside from taking up less room (to say nothing of requiring less water and fertilizer), smaller trees can better adapt to environmental stresses and could even produce more fruit since the plant's energies have been redirected.

Control tree height

For the last four years, Etherington and her colleagues have been testing various combinations of plant genes known to control tree height on a small orchard (of poplars). Under the supervision of the US Department of Agriculture, the resulting genetically modified trees—some of which were no more than six inches in height—and their impact on the surrounding natural environment were assessed. Tree height wasn't the only variable affected; leaf shapes, leaf colors, and even root production were altered in some cases.

The researchers say that they manually removed any chance that these test trees might somehow spread pollen or seeds, even adding that "dwarfed trees are unlikely to ... to spread because they will compete poorly with normal or wild trees." At this, one may recall Ian Malcolm's words in the movie "Jurassic Park"—"Life finds a way"—but such words take years to prove true or false in real life instead of just 90 minutes.

Dwarfed trees' promise

The dwarfed trees' promise of being both functional and ornamental is not unique. It wasn't so long ago that the Japanese-bred cube-shaped watermelons that could be stacked with greater ease in supermarkets. If dwarfed trees become plant nursery staples then, future aficionados of such specimens might have some intriguing discussions with bonsai enthusiasts.

Still, going back to the infomercial vision, imagine then a home where a tree motif is literally everywhere: the six-inch variety is found on coffee tables and desks—it's still unknown if fruit size will change proportionally—while larger versions are found on the patio and in the gardens. (And if one wanted to go further, there's actually a company that could develop clones of a single tree. That project's an entirely different matter, though.) Perhaps it was inevitable: with technological advances making the world ever smaller, shrinking nature might well have been the natural next step.

E-mail the author at massie@massie.com.

Asian stocks firm, Nikkei stars as yen softens

US Federal Reserve keeps key rates steady at 5.25%

DON PALMIGIANO lays on an inflatable bed as his mother, Blanche, looks on late Thursday night in front of an Apple store in Pasadena, California during the wait to purchase Apple Inc.'s iPhone. Palmigiano has been there since Tuesday.

SINGAPORE—GLOBAL STOCKS ROSE YESterday after the US Federal Reserve held rates steady, but the yen weakened further, helping lift Japan's Nikkei by more than 1 percent.

Asian markets were mostly firmer and European stocks opened higher.

The FTSE 100 index rose 0.2 percent, the CAC 40 gained 0.4 percent and the DAX added 0.5 percent after the Fed's steady hand kept appetite for risk high.

Crude oil futures were a touch firmer after US oil topped $70 a barrel for the first time in nearly 10 months the previous session, while gold steadied around $647 an ounce, helped in part by firmer oil prices.

In its report, the Fed acknowledged a recent easing in core US inflation but felt this might not last, suggesting a smaller chance of a cut in interest rates by the end of the year.

The dollar extended its post-Fed gains against the yen, prompting further buying of Toyota Motor and Honda, which have significant sales in the US market.

By early yesterday afternoon, the dollar was trading around 123.35 yen and the euro was also firmer at 165.9 yen.

"With volatility in the dollar/yen falling, conditions in the market are favoring yen carry trades again," said Mitsuru Sahara, a senior trader at Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ. "It looks like there will be another round of yen selling soon."

That is good news for investors buying shares in Japanese exporters.

China's main index, the Shanghai Composite, fell 2.1 percent after being down more than 3 percent earlier in the session.

South Korean stocks ran out of steam and ended down 0.5 percent after a strong start.

The Korea Composite Stock Price Index softened as foreign investors continued cashing in on the market's 22 percent rise this year. Worries about the firmer won's impact on exporters and a drop in Chinese stock markets added to investor unease.

Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd., Asia's most valuable technology stock, dropped 2.08 percent. But steel maker Posco Co. Ltd. rose 1.5 percent after it said it was in cooperation talks with rival Arcelor Mittal, although no progress had been made.

MSCI's measure of Asia-Pacific stocks excluding Japan edged up 0.2 percent.

Australian stocks rose for a second day. The benchmark S&P/ASX 200 index gained 0.15 percent as mining firms rose on firmer metal prices, while Wesfarmers Ltd. climbed to another record on expectations it would win the bidding for retailer Coles Group Ltd.

Wesfarmers rose 2.1 percent but Coles ended down 0.1 percent.

BHP Billiton Ltd. and Rio Tinto both gained 0.4 percent.

Oil futures held firm following a sharp drop in US gasoline stocks during the peak summer driving season.

Reuters

Japan core consumer prices down

TOKYO—JAPANESE CORE CONsumer prices fell slightly for a fourth straight month in May, bolstering expectations for the Bank of Japan to raise rates as early as August but go slow in tightening credit further.

But other government data including employment and household spending on Friday that came in line with forecasts further underlined the case for a BOJ move in the coming months.

The jobless rate stayed at a nine-year low of 3.8 percent in May, while household spending rose 0.4 percent year-on-year, rising for the fifth straight month, due to brisk sales of summer goods and beverages on good weather, the data showed.

The core consumer price index, excluding volatile fresh food prices, fell 0.1 percent in May from a year earlier, matching expectations and following a 0.1 percent fall in April.

"The Bank of Japan has been saying it will raise interest rates as long as the economy keeps expanding, even if consumer prices are still falling. So the data is unlikely to affect the timing of the next rate hike, which I expect in August," said Yasuhiro Onakado, chief economist at Daiwa SB Investments.

"But if growth in consumer prices remains very weak in the second half of this fiscal year, the pace of further rate hikes may remain slow."

The core CPI for the Tokyo area, which is released a month ahead of the nationwide figures, fell 0.1 percent in June, against a consensus forecast for a 0.1-percent increase.

Tokyo area prices fell despite higher gasoline prices, because of a drop in overseas travel costs compared with a year earlier, when the World Cup soccer tournament in Germany pushed up package tour prices, a government official said.

"Sluggishness in Tokyo core CPI shows that the scenario in which Tokyo prices last year were rising even when nationwide prices have been sluggish may be changing," said Mari Iwashita, fixed income strategist at Daiwa Securities SMBC.

Traders are now focusing on the BOJ's quarterly tankan corporate survey due out on Monday as well as speeches by BOJ Deputy Governor Toshiro Muto and another board member next week for clues on its policy outlook.

A Reuters Poll showed on Thursday that large Japanese firms are likely to remain upbeat on business conditions in the June tankan and expected to revise their capital spending plans in fiscal 2007/08 upward to a rise of 8.8 percent year-on-year.

Separate government data showed on Friday firms capitalized at 100 million yen ($811,200) or more, excluding sectors such as finance and real estate, were expected to boost capital spending by 13.9 percent in the year ending next March from a year before.

Japan's core inflation has been subdued despite an ongoing recovery in the world's second-largest economy, with year-on-year changes in consumer prices hovering below zero since February due in part to oil prices being down from the previous year.

Reuters

More regional pacts seen if Doha talks fail

CANBERRA—TRADING NATIONS WILL look for more bilateral and regional trade pacts if negotiations on a world trade deal collapse, said Australian Trade Minister Warren Truss.

He also said if the Doha round of World Trade Organization (WTO) talks remained stalled over the next two months, then any outcome would be pushed back by at least 18 months due to a lack of international trust and the 2008 US presidential elections.

"A breakdown in Doha over the next month or two would certainly lead to a significant delay in any multilateral outcome," Truss said in an interview on Friday.

"I think that time will be used by many countries to advance their own free trade agendas."

Truss will host a meeting of trade ministers from the 21-member Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) group next week, the first major meeting of trade delegates since G4 talks between the United States, Brazil, India and Europe broke down.

His comments mirror those of US Trade Representative Susan Schwab, who told the Australian newspaper that an Apec-wide free trade bloc could be a fallback if world trade talks fail.

"I think you will see a real acceleration of bilateral and regional deals including something like a free trade agreement of the Asia-Pacific if the Doha round really disappears from the scene," Schwab was reported as saying on Friday.

The Doha round of trade negotiations was launched nearly six years ago with the aim of freeing up world trade, injecting $300 billion into the world economy and helping lift millions of people out of poverty.

But the Doha round has stalled over European and US farm subsidies and tariffs, and concerns from major developing nations Brazil and India about opening their economies to more agricultural and industrial goods.

Apec covers 40 percent of the world's population and includes China, which is Australia's number one trading partner, as well as the United States, Japan, South Korea and Russia.

Reuters

People, Events & Products

Metrobank launches auto loan promo

METROPOLITAN BANK & TRUST Company (Metrobank) has tied-up with some of the country's largest car retailers in a bid to capture a bigger portion of the automobile loans market. The promotion, dubbed "MetroCar Great Rates Sale," is in line with the bank's strategy to grow its consumer loans portfolio.

The promotion, which will run for three months, offers special rates to car buyers who will avail of the Metrobank MetroCar auto loan package in the bank's Metro Manila branches. Metrobank depositors will be entitled to an additional rate reduction.

"The promo is part of the bank's objective to continue expanding its consumer lending, including its vehicle financing business," said Metrobank consumer lending group head Rowena Oliveros.

"The car market is on an upswing and many financial institutions are offering competitive packages. This promo will offer one of the most competitive packages in the market today," explained Oliveros.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) reported last week an increase in automobile loans extended by universal, commercial, and thrift banks. The BSP said that total automobile loans went up by 19.9 percent to P74.7 billion in the first three months of 2007, from P62.3 billion a year ago. It also said that the first quarter level was also 3.5 percent higher than the P72.2-billion level recorded in the fourth quarter of 2006.

Metrobank has partnered with dealers of major car brands, namely: Toyota Manila Bay, Ford Global City, Honda Cars Pasig, Hyundai Quezon Avenue, Isuzu Inteco Edsa, Kia Motors Greenhills, Mitsubishi Citimotors Inc, and Nissan UN Avenue.

Apart from the competitive rates, borrowers are assured of the other benefits of a MetroCar auto loan such as loan values of up to 80 percent of a new car's net selling price, affordable installment plan of up to 60 months, fast processing of loan application, and worry-free loan repayment through issuance of postdated checks or automatic debit arrangements.

Metrobank is the Philippines' largest bank with consolidated assets of P663.4 billion as of March 2007. It has a local branch network of over 540 branches and 35 international branches and offices in Japan, Hongkong, Korea, Shanghai, Singapore, Taiwan, the Americas, Guam, Canada, Austria, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

UNILAB DIVISIONS HELP GK VILLAGE

Unilab product divisions United American Pharmaceuticals (UAP) and Medichem recently celebrated their joint anniversary with an outreach program at the Gawad Kalinga (GK) community in the Napico Compound, Karangalan Village, Pasig City. The program includes a house build, medical mission, children's party, seminar on respiratory health and diseases, and a livelihood workshop on soap making. Photo shows UAP-Medichem officers and staff led by Medichem general manager and divisional VP Chito Santa Maria (standing, 8th from left) and UAP general manager and divisional VP Jay Salazar (standing, 9th from left) handing the check donation to GK Coordinator Willy Cardenas (standing, 6th from right).

THE BREW AWARDS

Brew stands for 'BizNews Asia Real Estate Who's Who'. Antonio Lopez, publisher and editor-in-chief of the highly-rated and widely-read weekly magazine, BizNews Asia, conceptualized the Brew Awards, to honor and give due recognition to twenty five top personalities in the Real Estate industry in the country today. The Brew Awards is one of the most exciting and relevant component of the Real Estate Festival, a four-day exhibit of all top real estate developments in the country and is slated to unfold on July 26-29, at the World Trade Center in Pasay City. The July 2007 issue of BizNews Asia will feature these twenty five top personalities. The said issue will define the achievements they have accomplished as viewed by BizNews Asia. Lopez recently signed an agreement endorsing the Philippine Real Estate Festival and the joint effort to launch the Brew Awards together with Rosemārie C. Basa, overall chair of the event and a national director of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Association (CREBA). Basa is immediate past chair of the board of trustees of the Creba Social Housing Foundation. Formal awarding of certificate of recognition is scheduled on Friday, July 27, at 6:30 p.m., at the Grand-ballroom of the Intercontinental Hotel, Makati City. Lopez is currently chair of the Manila Overseas Press Club (MOPC).

SUN TRIPLE TREATS WINNERS

Sun Cellular's AVP for Prepaid Joan Dueñas (left most) and VP for CRM Reuben Pangan (right most) awards the winners of Sun's Triple Treats raffle promo. From left: Edeliza Rivera, Edson Jabson, and Chona Santos each took home a brand new Samsung 40-inch LCD TV and Home Theater System in Sun's Triple Treats raffle.

Product FILES

SkyCable ushers in Philippine TV's digital era

SKYCABLE BRINGS YET ANOTHER big innovation to transform Filipinos' TV viewing habits: the DigiBox-a multifunctional device that gives subscribers expanded control over their television watching experience. Each DigiBox is unique, as it comes with its own smart card to ensure that the signals come to your TV set alone, much like how a SIM card works with a mobile phone. This lets audiences sign up for more channels to watch and helps SkyCable send customized subscriber announcements. With the DigiBox's password-guarded channel-lock feature, parents can make sure their children watch only educational and kid-friendly programs. When the children are at school or already asleep, parents can simply input the password to access their favorite programs on the locked channels. The DigiBox also makes it possible to learn more about upcoming shows or the one you are watching. All it takes is a press of a button and the nifty gadget shows what's on and even what's showing next. So there's no more guessing what show is on when you turn on the TV in the middle of the program. Plus, the Digibox also shows the synopsis of shows you're watching and those of the next program. Favorite channels can also be marked to make channel surfing more convenient. The DigiBox can save marked favorite channels into a single list that a subscriber can easily access anytime. What's more, built-in games, Tetris and Go Bang, will surely keep kids busy while waiting for their favorite show. Best of all, the DigiBox gives subscribers access to unbeatable digital cable TV packages. With so many features translated to conveniences, you'd think that the Digibox comes with a high price tag. But SkyCable makes it easier for Filipinos to try the Digibox because from April 15 to July 15, subscribers availing of the Digibox get free one month SkyCable Platinum HBO, Metro and MBC Pack subscriptions, we well as SkyCable Season Pass for Pinoy Big Brother 24/7 and Hiram na Mukha, all for a one-time fee of P2,000. Remote controlled TV gets redefined as the DigiBox brings the future of home entertainment to today's living rooms. Call 631-0000 to avail of the DigiBox from SkyCable and enjoy truly value-packed cable TV entertainment.

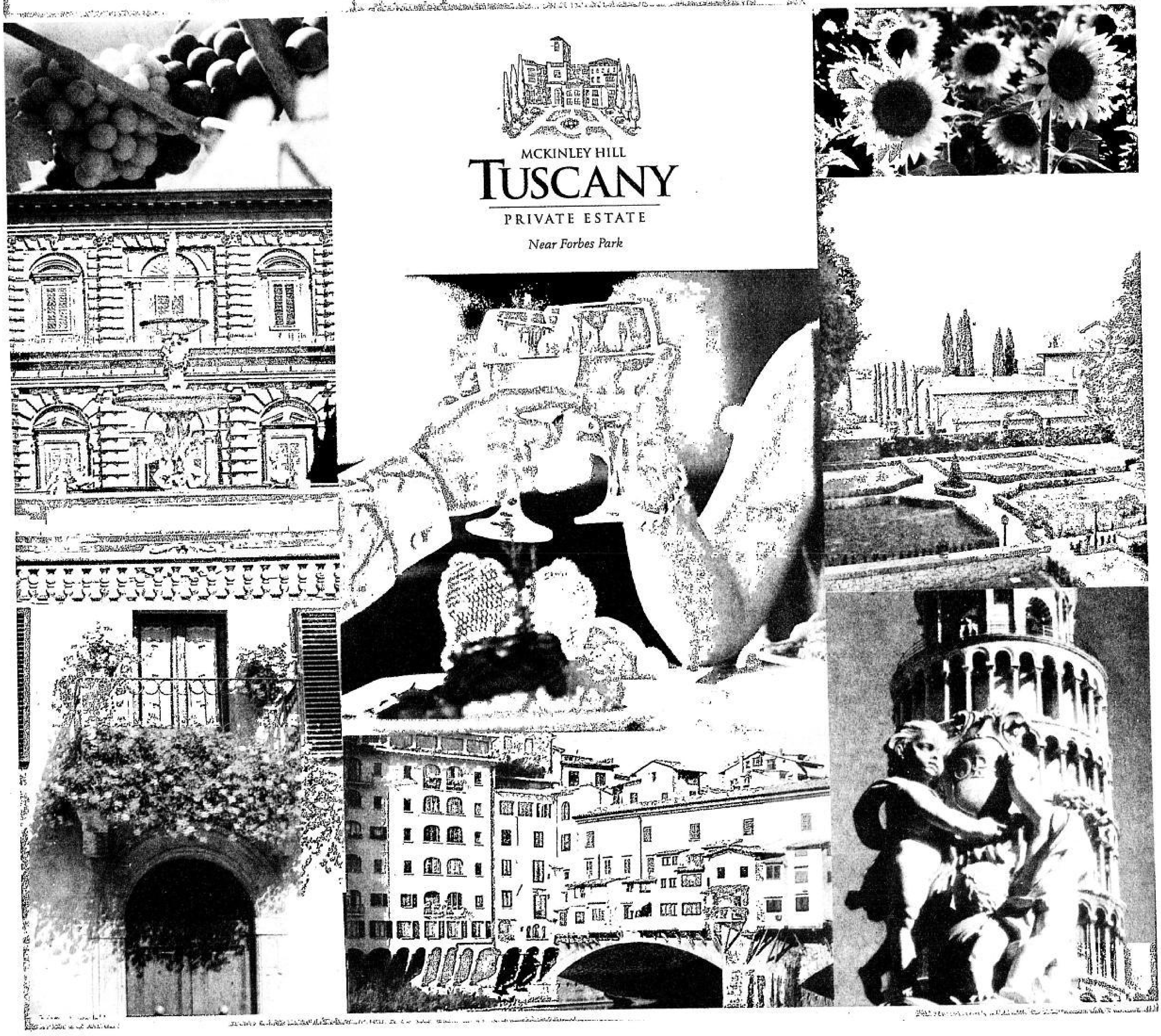
HCCA TRAINS BAGUIO NURSES

Health Care Corp of America or HCCA recently trained chief nurses and supervisors of private and government hospitals in Baguio City, as part of the company's corporate social responsibility efforts in the Philippines. The training seminar was conducted by Wanona Fritz (in photo), HCCA International chief nurse and director of international operations. The seminar is part of HCCA's initiative to give back to the local nursing community and assist in the country's efforts to cultivate world-class nurses and globally competitive healthcare professionals. HCCA is a global organization with operations in the Asia-Pacific region, the Middle East, East Asia, Europe, Central America, and Caribbean locations. Parties interested in the educational and sponsorship programs of HCCA Philippines may contact the company at 757-1000. HCCA Philippines is located at 33rd Floor Tower 1 The Enterprise Centre, 6766 Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

TIVOLI BITES CREATIVE SAMPLING

Last June 4, Tivoli Bites and Tivoli Bars invaded offices to kick-off the month long 'The Treat you Gotta Repeat' tour in all major offices, convenient stores and malls in Metro Manila making memorable moments one person at a time. It was pure enjoyment to the guests as they buzzed their way to the Tivoli Booths from their work breaks enjoying the fun games prepared by the Tivoli team. Tivoli Bites is available in two delectable flavors - rich milk chocolate with creamy white chocolate center; and another with the delightful mix of milk chocolate with strawberry-flavored filling while the scrumptious Tivoli Bar is available in rich milk chocolate with rice crispies - bringing pleasure to each and every one's discerning taste palettes. The creative sampling shall be from June 4 to July 2. See you there!

Inspired by the most beautiful region in Italy



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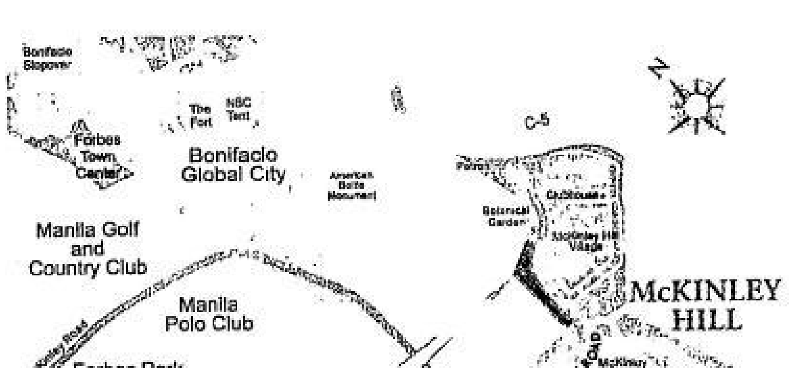
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For Announcement Purposes Only

Creba fest to highlight Filipino home designs

By Charles E. Buban

EVER WONDERED WHAT the future of Filipino house design would be like?

At least 12 universities would be presenting their own ideas in a design competition in the upcoming Philippine Real Estate Festival organized by the Chamber of Real estate Builders Association (Creba).

"The Kasaysayan ng Bahay Pilipino design competition is the very first of its kind in the country and will pay tribute to the evolution of Filipino houses—from prehistoric to postmodern-day era," said architect Felino "Jun" Palafox Jr., founder and principal architect of Palafox Associates who will be serving as the design consultant of the contest.

Young talents

According to Palafox, the contest seeks to recognize the country's young talents and the festival happening from July 26 to 29 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City will give them a chance to show their ideas.

Their works will be presented throughout the duration of the Philippine Real Estate Festival, which will gather the country's top home builders and developers as well as key business leaders and top officials of the country's housing sector.

Palafox explained that a number of today's Filipino home designs are a mixture of different influences that dates back to our ancestor's caves and tree houses, to *bahay kubo* and *bahay na bato*.

The competition is a good time to look at the country's traditional architecture and perhaps learn how to incorporate them to the 21st century design, Palafox said.

Embracing life at its finest at Number One Rockwell

In the city, finding a place where you can live life to the fullest has become a challenge. Dime-a-dozen residential buildings have sprouted all over the metro, yet none is special enough for the discerning few who can truly appreciate the best things in life.

Number One Rockwell, the signature project of premiere developer Rockwell Land Corporation, answers the needs and fulfills the desires of society's urbane set. The project is envisioned to be an urban sanctuary where one can embrace life at its finest, surrounded by lush greenery, luxury shops and leisure facilities.

The two-tower residential enclave is the company's most anticipated and daring project. It features the world's first Z-shaped units, providing spectacular views from both ends of one's unit.

The East Tower, with its sleek sharp edges, offers a breathtaking 180-degree view and ten different sceneries. It reaches up 45 storeys, with the Sky Deck located at the 41st level. Another first in architectural designs in the country, the uniquely designed East Tower showcases the innovation that Number One Rockwell adheres to.

Meanwhile, the West Tower with its curvilinear design perfectly complements the East Tower's sharp edges, as it is made up of two halves that seem to slide away from each other at the center. Once completed, the West Tower of One Rockwell will definitely define the distinctive Rockwell skyline, as it will stand at an impressive height of 55 storeys.

Nestled amongst lush greens is a piazza with quaint boutique shops and cozy cafes, dotted with cozy tables and occasional park benches for residents and guests to enjoy the al fresco ambiance.

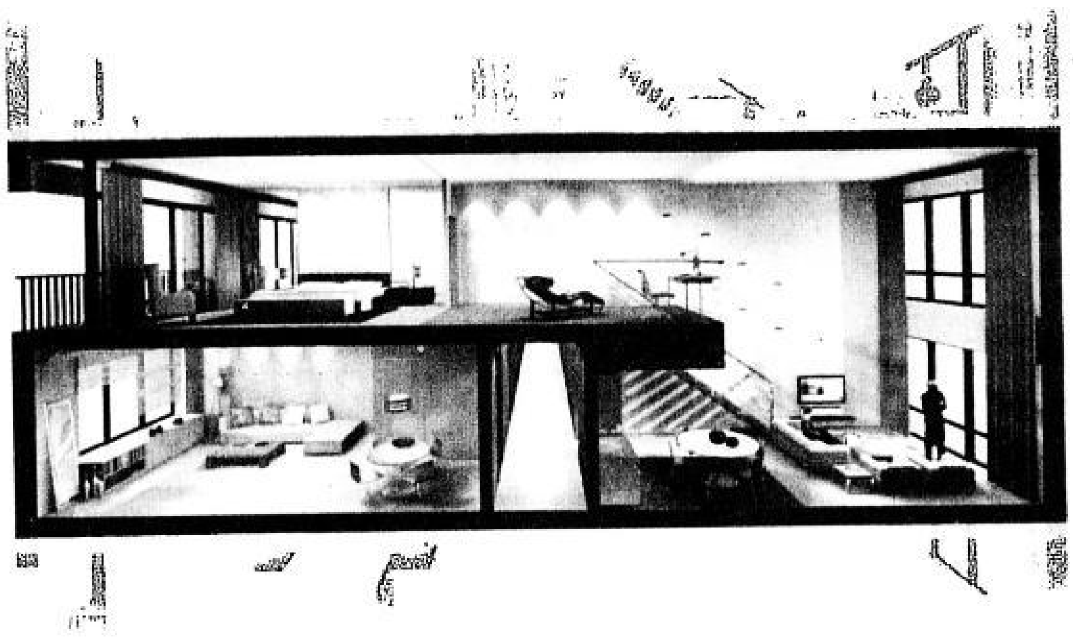
A second level roundabout provides private access to the residences where one can enjoy a secluded view of the bustle at the ground level from the grand lobby.

High above the ground and away from the noise of the urban jungle, residents and guests can soak in the sun or take a refreshing dip in the pool or while the night away underneath the stars at Number One Rockwell's roof-deck amenities level.

Indeed, Number One Rockwell provides a nest where you can find respite, bask in the comfort and enjoy the privilege of the Rockwell lifestyle.

Right beside it is the Power Plant Mall, which offers a wide array of delightful shopping, dining and entertainment choices, all catering to people who celebrate life: fashionistas, gourmands, art connoisseurs and sports and movie buffs. Its latest offering, Archaeology at R2 Lifestyle, showcases 27 different shops featuring unique fashion finds and fabulous designs for the chic stylephile.

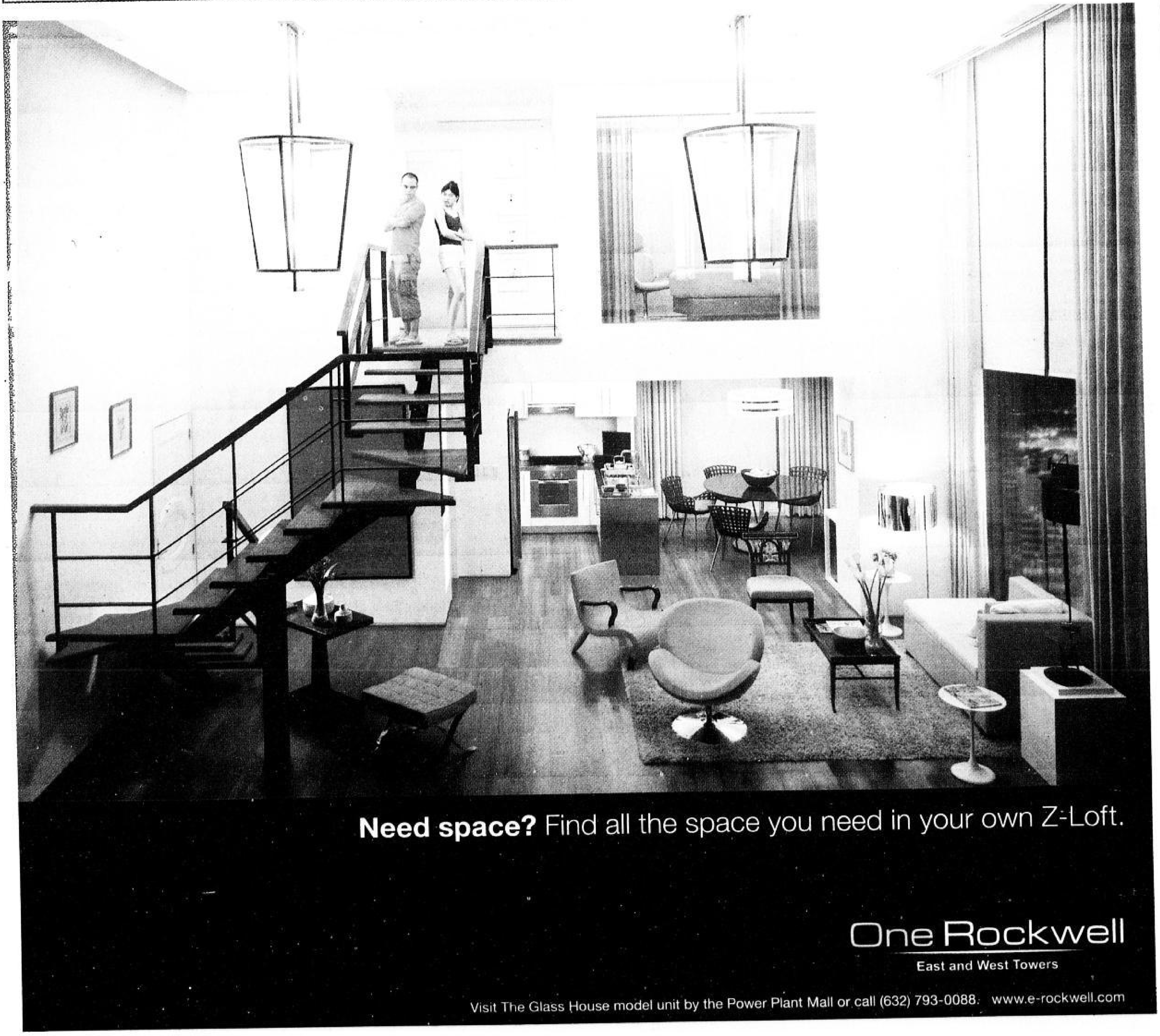
Then there is Rockwell's Block 09, the city's newest hip and happening destination. By day, its row of coffee shops and restaurants is the perfect spot for a caffeine fix or a power brunch. At night, it's the choice hang-out for the stylish set looking for a place to chill.



Residents of Number One Rockwell can enjoy the benefits of the Rockwell Club's various recreational amenities and activities. Members can achieve wellness of the mind, body and spirit through the exclusive club's alternative classes, from yoga and pilates to tai-chi and flamenco, among others.

Find your own space at Number One Rockwell to explore the wonders of living to the fullest-and without limits.

To learn more about Number One Rockwell, call 793.0088 or visit www.e-rockwell.com.



Need space? Find all the space you need in your own Z-Loft.

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East and West Towers

Visit The Glass House model unit by the Power Plant Mall or call (632) 793-0088. www.e-rockwell.com

High transaction costs, rent control linked to RP slums

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE PHILIPPINES IS THE ONLY COUNTRY (other than Taiwan) in East Asia with a rent control law. Rent control and high transaction costs tend to discourage property owners from participating in the market, leading to lower supply.

If households cannot buy or rent housing due to prohibitive costs and lack of options, they may turn to self-built houses, or worse, illegally built houses on lots owned by other entities (squatting).

Transaction costs

This, in effect, is what studies from the Global Property Guide indicates, adding that the Philippines has one of the highest transaction costs in property purchases in Asia.

GPG says countries with high transaction costs tend to have expensive houses and large slum populations. "The Philippines comes out bottom-of-class in the entire region."

Prince Christian R. Cruz, GPG senior economist, says "round-trip" transaction costs include all the costs involved in the property sale-purchase transaction, presented as percent of property value. The sale and purchase of property involves many costs: registration, real estate agent fees, legal fees, and sales and transfer taxes.

Total round-trip transaction costs in the Philippines can reach up to 35 percent of property value, these costs include VAT (12 percent), capital gains tax (6 percent), agent's commission (5 percent), documentary stamp (1.5 percent), local deed tax (0.5 - 0.75 percent), legal and notary fees and other incidental costs.

More room for corruption

There are eight procedures in registering property in the Philippines, described by Global Property Guide as "the most cumbersome in East Asia."

"In addition, payments must be made to three different offices: the Register of Deeds for the registration fee, the BIR for all the taxes and the City or Municipal Treasurer's Office for the transfer tax. With each office and payment, there is always room for corruption and extortion."

Based on a survey by UN-Habitat, there were 20 million slum dwellers in the Philippines in 2001. This represented about 44 percent of the country's urban population. There are no exact figures on the number of slum dwellers in Metro Manila. In Metro Manila, slum areas are scattered all over the metropolis.

Recommendations

The GPG study provides several recommendations for the improvement of real estate markets in Asia, Cruz says. For the Philippines, the recommendations include:

- The establishment of a one-stop-shop for property registration and payment of taxes;
- Centralization of property valuation records held by the BIR, city and municipal treasurer's offices, banks, Register of Deeds and other agencies;
- Establishment of a standard property valuation system;
- Creation of a website for all the necessary data for the real estate market; and abolition of the rent control law (the government should instead provide a standard contract for rental agreements).

Complex Metro Manila

Cruz says the problems of Metro Manila's real estate market are more complex than other countries. The population density of Metro Manila is higher compared to other Asian cities.

Metro Manila's 11 million people is governed by 17 mayors, compared to Singapore's 4.5 million governed by one prime minister.

Cruz laments that Metro Manila lacks central planning of its housing, transportation and infrastructure systems. In addition, conflicts between city mayors often hinder the smooth implementation of projects.

Sustainability in the tropics

DESIGN DIMENSIONS

Isabel Berenguer Asuncion

BECAUSE RAPID URBANIZATION is happening mostly in Asia, the development of ecologically-friendly architectural solutions has become an imperative. The need for designs that respond to our particular environment becomes even more impelling when one realizes that internationally accepted architectural and interior design concepts have developed in the cold West and not in the Asian tropics.

Unfortunately the Western approach fails to address the issues faced by the Asian cities. These include needing more ways to maximize prevailing breezes yet dissipate accumulated ones, taking advantage of our high precipitation and dealing with the heat and humidity and our urban thermal environment. We need only to look at most high-rise buildings in Makati and houses in the residential areas that are trying very hard to follow international trends but give very little thought to our local context.

More than being ecological system failures within themselves, they continually contribute to the deteriorating living conditions of the city. Every morning when I stare out into the horizon from some Edsa flyover, I see the disgusting cast of gray haze blanketing our skyline. It is a disturbing sign that we have, in the total consciousness of the nation, failed miserably to take care of ourselves and our posterity.

Sustainable dev't

The World Commission on Environment and Development defines sustainable development in this manner: "It meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." In my dictionary this translates as less waste, better waste management, more recycling, less excess and overindulgence and care for biodiversity.

As planners, architects and designers of the cities we live in, we assume the responsibility of initiating changes that make our planet sustainable. Nature after all has many gifts that make this possible. For one, everything we need to work with is here, and can be worked with in its natural state and without much processing—therefore, with less use of power.

Self-preservation

Secondly, we live in a biodiverse environment with an assortment of species and variations in quantity, quality and design that support our creative talents and widen our options. Lastly, almost everything is renewable and reproducible when allowed to do so in its own time. As dwellers of the city and inhabitants of the planet, we have to cultivate an awareness for putting the community beyond any of our personal intentions and preferences. It is a move not of self-sacrifice, but of self-preservation.

We have to accept that we are at the mercy of natural forces that have powers way beyond ourselves. Given that, we do not move against these forces but with them, so that we harness rather than exploit the natural principles of ecology and life itself.

If we can start simply by maximizing prevailing breezes, taking advantage of our high precipitation and dealing with the heat and humidity within its natural laws, we would be on our way. When we can be aware of how to preserve, conserve and reuse, we would have accepted our place as a species that is interdependent with the rest of the planet. Hopefully, with that constant awareness, we will eventually wake up to less hazy mornings in the city.

The villa becomes Hacienda Escudero

VILLA Escudero

ONCE KNOWN FOR ITS POPULAR TOURIST destination Villa Escudero, the Escudero estate embraces a change that will soon become a landmark of the Filipino good life.

"It is going to be a big development that awakens the Filipino's pride in his/her history and cultural heritage. Taking its inspiration from Villa Escudero, Hacienda Escudero offers the ultimate experience in Filipino living," says Alfred Xerez-Burgos, president of Landco Pacific Corp., the developer of the residential resort and leisure tourism project.

Birth of the hacienda

Talks for the development of Hacienda Escudero started years ago. It was only last year, however, when Villa Escudero president and founder Conrado "Don Ado" Escudero signed an agreement with the premier real estate developer.

"I conceived of Villa Escudero then as a place where one can experience and appreciate life at its simplest and Philippine culture at its best," Don Ado says. And with Hacienda Escudero, we want people to enjoy these things not just for one day, but every day."

Hacienda Escudero takes its inspiration from the vision of a relaxing, unhurried and rejuvenating lifestyle that Villa Escudero espouses.

Burgos says that Landco Pacific is investing P10 billion to bring this vision to life.

"We are working closely with the Esculeros for this development," he adds. "They are active landowners who know and feel the market for Hacienda Escudero."

MASTERPLAN

Espousing the good life

In an industry where the primary selling proposition is to emulate foreign architecture, Hacienda Escudero stands out as a uniquely different development that celebrates and honors all that is distinctively and genuinely Filipino.

It will be nestled within a 415-hectare coconut plantation, surrounded by rivers, abundant trees and magnificent mountains. So just imagine enjoying traipsing in surging waters, taking leisurely walks in tree-lined avenues and enjoying unobstructed views of Mounts Banahaw, Malarayat and San Cristobal.

The residential area of the development evokes the charm of a provincial town with the frills of modern living and limitless leisure experiences.

Its commercial area, on the other hand, will have shopping and dining areas where property owners and guests alike can enjoy first-rate products and sumptuous treats.

With more developments underway, Hacienda Escudero promises to be the premier residential resort and leisure-tourist destination in the country.

Landco Pacific is a multiproduct developer of high-quality residential resorts, leisure farms, residential developments, shopping centers and CBDs, and memorial parks. It continues to provide superior value in its developments and is widely recognized as a benchmark for innovative and outstanding lifestyle products that revolutionize the way we live.

THE OLD WORLD CHARM, NEW APPEAL OF TAAL

Taal welcomes Buckingham Hills, a new landmark amid the old churches, ancestral homes and other historical landmarks that Taal is known for. Buckingham Hills, Taal's first upscale community, is the 19-hectare flagship project of Carmon Ventures and Resources Development Corp. (CVRDC) in the Calabarzon area. It features premiere facilities like pools, badminton courts, soccer field, playground and jogging lanes. Shown is the Prince William model unit.

Enderun Colleges scheduled to open at McKinley Hill

FILIPINOS ARE BEST KNOWN worldwide for their unequalled warmth and hospitality, so having a school that grooms students to become experts in the hospitality industry should come as no surprise. What may come as a pleasant surprise however is the rise of a 1.7-hectare campus at McKinley Hill in Fort Bonifacio, equipped with all the modernity and feel of a Swiss culinary and hotel management school.

Established in 2005, Enderun Colleges originally set campus at a posh building in Ortigas Complex, Pasig City. The school offers a Bachelor's program that leads up to a Bachelor's Degree in International Hospitality Management. Its name "Enderun," which literally means "palace school," originated from the name of a prestigious Turkish school during the Ottoman period, which produced many statesmen.

To produce leaders

"Just like the ancient Turkish school, our goal is to produce leaders, too, but this time, in the hotel and culinary industry," said Tricia Tensuan, marketing director for the school.

Enderun Colleges is the only school in the Philippines partnered with Les Roches Swiss Hotel Association School of Hotel Management, a prestigious and highly respected hospitality management school from Switzerland. True to the vision of the lead founder and chair of the advisory board Jack Tuason of a school of world-class caliber, the quest to find a bigger, and needless to say, better campus came naturally next.

Major considerations

"We wanted the campus to be spacious and easily accessible. These were major considerations but of course not the only factors," Tensuan recounted. After a long and arduous search for the campus site, they zeroed in on Fort Bonifacio, having seen the great potential of the new developments in the area.

"Even within Fort Bonifacio we also considered and looked at a lot of different properties. However, it was Megaworld that gave us the best option in terms of what we needed as a school," Tensuan added.

One important factor that also appealed to the school administration was the school zoning. "We like the fact that there are other international schools there," she adds.

Asian-colonial theme

The sprawling campus, which opens this year, boasts of an Asian-colonial theme with seven independent buildings so named to create what seems like a small city. There's a building called "Museum," "Embassy," "Bank" and so on. "It's a city within a city," explained architect Bong Recio, who heads the design team of Recio+Casas Architects, the masterplanner for the project.

Other than the fully equipped classrooms and lecture rooms, these buildings house functional amenities like gym, spa, library, restaurants run by students, student union, kitchen laboratories, and even student dorm-hotels that reflect qualities of a five-star hotel.

"We took off from the colonial buildings that you might see in Hong Kong, Singapore, and in Malaysia, where you might see British influence," Recio explained. The building designs display a fusion of both Asian and European influences.

Wonderful landscaping

Indeed, the campus boasts of a wonderful landscaping, lined with unpolluted jogging paths. The whole campus is also Wi-Fi connected so students can hook up on the Internet even while relaxing under the shades of a tree.

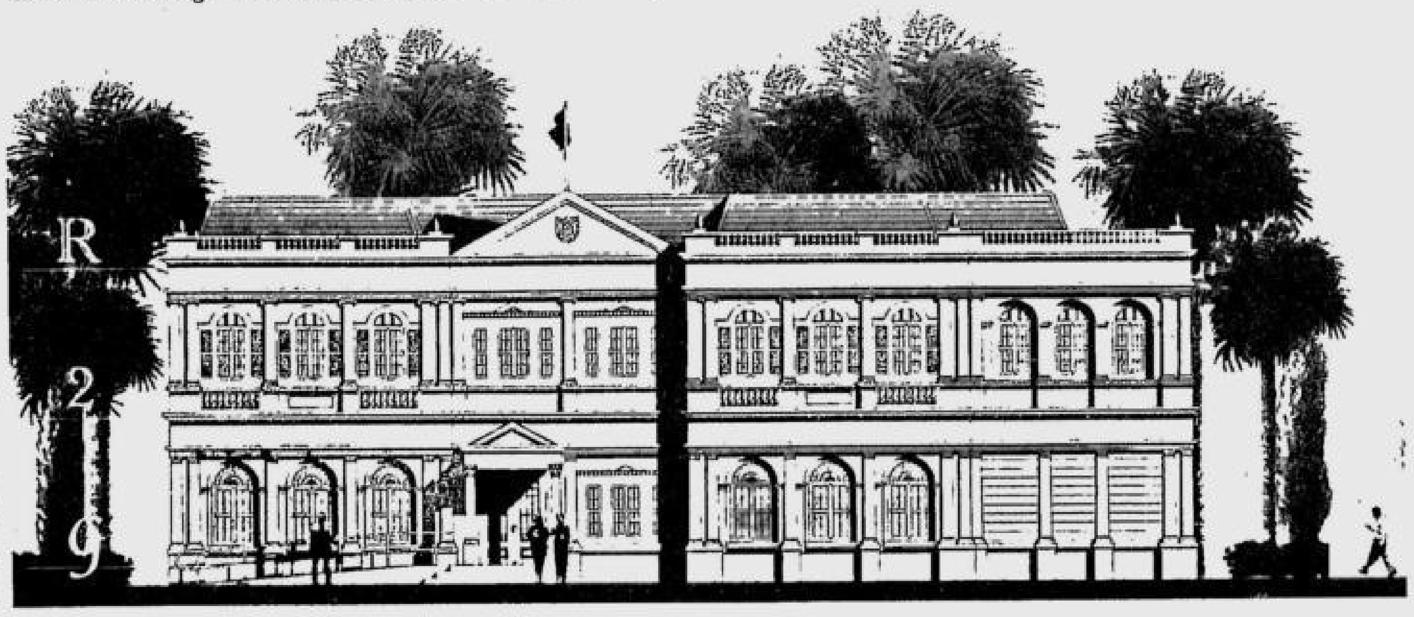
Within the campus, heavy European influence is most obvious on the "Museum" building where classes on general subjects are held, and the "Embassy" which holds the administration and international language center.

Providing a very strong contrast amid the Colonial-inspired buildings is the Culinary Center, right in the middle of the campus. The impressive building, with its sharp geometric cuts, houses the culinary classes. "The structure itself is composed of a lot of glass and steel, giving it a very modern look and feel, inside and out," Recio explained.

World-class campus

As a whole, Enderun Colleges has chosen McKinley Hill to highlight the student experience and the campus feel that's conducive to learning. They needed a world-class campus where students can feel comfortable and at the same time big enough to hold their virtually real luxury hotels and restaurants, giving the students the perfect training ground needed for their future careers in the hospitality industry.

The 50-hectare community which is McKinley Hill is fast becoming a diverse yet complete inner-city neighborhood with the recent establishment of major institutions such as international embassies, top-class schools, and even a cluster of high-end business process outsourcing (BPO) buildings at the modern McKinley Cyberpark. Soon to rise also is a Venetian-themed mall to complete McKinley Hill's promise of a Live-Work-Play-Learn environment for all its residents.



ENDERUN Colleges' "Embassy" will house the school administration and international language center.

Green transport system and economic attractiveness

METRO MANILA IS ENJOYING AN unprecedented construction and development growth. This has resulted in more people coming to the city and the influx will continue as more and more buildings are constructed. Unfortunately, our existing infrastructure, particularly the road system is reaching saturation. Road congestion is taking us more time to move around the city. It is also costing us time, wasted fuel and our health.

A possible solution? A green and efficient transport system.

After all, a city is as good as its transport system. The key to improving the environmental performance of Manila is to reduce the use of private vehicles and to provide and encourage the use of a good public transport system.

Population density

The National Capital Region or NCR with a population of 10 million in a land area of 620 square kilometers has a population density of 16,000 per sq km. That puts us more or less in the same league as Seoul, Taipei and Shanghai where economic development has outpaced environmental protection. Some of our Asean neighbors have the following population density: Singapore 8,350, Bangkok 6,450 and Kuala Lumpur 2,750. Hong Kong has a population density of 7,030, London 5,100, Tokyo 4,750, Paris 3,550, L.A. 2,750, Toronto 2,650, Sydney 2,100 and New York 2,050.

It is interesting to note that to the south of Manila, Calabarzon has a population of 9.3 million in a land area of 16,600 sq km, or a population density of 560 per sq km.

GREEN ARCHITRENDS

Amado de Jesus

To the north of Manila, Central Luzon has even a smaller population density of 381. By the way, our country's population of 76.5 million over 340,575 sq km total land area gives us a population density of 225. Local data come from the 2006 Philippine Statistical Yearbook.

Carbon dioxide emissions

Given these data and the need to decongest Metro Manila, it would seem that developing land outside the city center and creating new green developments would be expedient. It would also cut down on carbon dioxide emissions.

Carbon dioxide emissions are attributed to a large extent to transportation. For example, in Europe and in the United States, a quarter of carbon emissions are traced to transportation. At home, carbon emissions from transportation comprise one-third of total greenhouse gases emission from buses, cars, trucks, jeeps and tricycles.

Manila's blessings

Fortunately, Manila is blessed with an urban axis accessible by airport and waterfront routes. The Manila Bay, Port Area and Pasig River are good means for metropolitan passenger and cargo transportation network that will help decongest traffic.

The existing railway transit system cuts down millions of pesos in traffic losses in the way of productive time, fuel and public health. However, the Light Rail Transit ridership in 2006 was only 111 million or roughly 304,000 passengers daily. The LRT and the MRT or Metro Rail Transit are widely accepted but are not adequate to serve commuter needs. Extension of the railway transit system will encourage more car owners to take the metro train.

The ongoing developments in the north and the south of Manila will be greatly supported by the construction of alternate routes and transportation links to those areas.

THE TOKYO subway system is the cleanest and most extensive in the world. The trains are extremely punctual and crime is almost unknown on the network, as is vandalism.

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Other schemes

Many countries are now adopting innovative schemes to decongest their cities, especially within their central business districts or CBDs. Efficient transport systems are known to attract economic development.

One popular scheme to decongest cities is what they refer to as the road toll where motorists are charged a congestion fee when they enter specific areas in the city. This has been successfully implemented for some time now in Singapore and in London. According to studies, this scheme has resulted in 30 percent fewer traffic delays inside the charging zones compared with the period before it was implemented.

Another scheme would be to provide clean and efficient trams or shuttle buses running on alternative fuels, such as biofuel, within very busy areas in the city. This would save many people the inconvenience of either driving their cars or hailing a taxi for awkward distances that are too short for using vehicles and yet too far for walking.

Providing bicycling and pedestrian networks is also an effective way to reduce traffic within the city. However, this will only work if special zones or areas are allotted for bicycles and pedestrians, something grossly missing in many cities.

The growing popularity of motorcycles in Manila has prompted some people to say that it's a sign of progress. However, for others, they say that it's a sign of our inefficient transport system. Since motorbikes also contribute to the pollution in the city, it cannot be a sustainable means or alternative transport system.

In urban planning, a healthy combination of green mixed development would be effective in cutting down mobility problems in the city. By encouraging people to work close to their homes in walkable communities, pollution is reduced and people have more time to relax, take up a hobby and be with their families for longer hours, and to be more productive in their work places.

Finally, we cannot overlook the importance of city and traffic management because the more efficiently cities are managed, the better they can contribute to the well-being and quality of life of their citizens.

* * *

For comments or inquiries, e-mail amadodejesus@gmail.com.

Major developers invested heavily in Bonifacio Global City

WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, OVER 9,000 residential condominium units spread in at least 28 high-rise buildings will become available in Bonifacio Global City, indicating the status of the 240-hectare business district as a fast-rising urban center. In addition, 14 office towers as well as major institutions like the 600-bed ultra modern St. Luke's hospital are also under construction.

Funded individually by the major players in the Philippine real estate industry, the fast-rising projects in Bonifacio Global City represent a collective investment in the area with an estimated value of at least P70 billion, strong assurance of the district's emergence as a premier residential and business hub.

Among those betting heavily on the keen prospects of Bonifacio Global City are listed companies Ayala Land, Megaworld, Robinsons Land and C and P Homes' subsidiary Brittany Corp. Other companies that are seeing the great potentials of the rising business district are Federal Land, Philtown Properties, Century Properties, Meridien, G&W Architects, Winville Development Corp., PhilRealty Global Marketing Inc., Daichi Properties, Golden Forum Land, WLand and First Global BYO.

Projection

Jun Bisnar, head for commercial operations of Fort Bonifacio Development Corp., the firm taking charge of overall development of the area, projects that about 7,000 to 9,000 new households will soon establish residence in this dynamic section of Taguig City. As families flock to the area, a fresh wave of office and commercial buildings are set to follow suit.

BONIFACIO Global City by day

Unlike other business districts in the metropolis, Bonifacio Global City is prepared to provide an environment where residences, offices, schools and commercial centers are within walking distance of one another. The new masterplan of the City Center resulted to more efficient traffic flows for vehicles as well as for the people on the ground.

Bisnar noted: "This advantage will allow residents and other locators to spend quality time with their family, on their various interests and hobbies in life, and on what really matters to them. Our innovative masterplan includes a modern road network that works, attractive amenities that encourage walking, lush parks and open spaces and other elements that contribute to better quality of life and good health because of the invigorating and clean environment of Bonifacio Global City. All these will ensure that Bonifacio Global City will deserve its descriptor as the 'home of passionate minds.'"

Various lifestyles

The promise of urban living in a central in-city location is the reason behind the brisk sales of Serendra, a 12-hectare residential complex with 65 percent of the area devoted to lush landscaping. It has the highest open space ratio among in-city residential condominium. The complex offers various lifestyles.

One Serendra, by Ayala Land Premier, is the lowest density residential condominium project in Metro Manila with units that offer exclusivity and privacy. Community Innovations' Two Serendra is composed of condominium clusters that offer vibrant social interaction. But whatever lifestyle one chooses at Serendra, all homeowners benefit from its being minutes away from the Makati Business District.

Robinsons Land has three residential condo projects—the 44-story McKinley Park Residences, the 40-story Fifth Avenue and the 28-story Fort Residences—in Bonifacio Global City. The three condos will yield around 1,200 units, which have been successfully offered in the market.

Century Properties is the builder of the 39-story South of Market twin towers and the 32-story Essensa East Forbes, while Philtown Properties is constructing the 43-story One McKinley Place and the 28-story Fairways Tower.

Fastest-growing area

Most developers agree that the innovative masterplan of the area, built around the Bonifacio High Street and the City Center, is a chief attraction of Bonifacio Global City. Jing Serrano, president of Brittany Corp., has pointed out that aside from being the fastest-growing area in the Philippines, "BGC was well masterplanned with wider roads, ample open spaces and many amenities." Brittany is constructing The Avant at the Fort, a 38-story residential tower with 300 units. Avant is the first of Brittany's series of residential projects in Bonifacio Global City.

Another developer, G & W Architects, has pioneered the construction of build-to-own condo projects in BGC. Among its projects, which are mostly sold out, are the 22-story Penhurst Park Place turned over in 2004, the 22-story Kensington Place completed in July 2006, the 21-story Grand Hamptons Place slated for delivery in December 2007, and the 28-story Sapphire Residences, scheduled for groundbreaking at the end of the year.

With the simultaneous rise of commercial/retail, residential, institutional and office developments, it is expected that the critical mass needed by Bonifacio Global City will come in the next two years as more developers and investors continue to pour their resources into the area, Bisnar said. The best indicator of Bonifacio Global City's emergence as a premier business hub is the rise of property values in the area together with the heavy influx of investments pouring in this new modern business district.

CrownAsia's Antipolo enclaves: refuge from the concrete jungle

CROWNASIA, THE COUNTRY'S pioneer developer of themed communities with value and style, presents two ideal residential communities located in Antipolo City that boast expanses of natural, sprawling greens and temperate weather year-round. Mille Luce, an enclave inspired by picturesque Italy, and Cottonwoods, a community inspired by those classic American suburban homes surrounded by trees, offer a retreat from the bustle of the concrete jungle without having to leave Metro Manila.

The heights of Antipolo offer a vista of the metro's skyline by day and city lights by night. Antipolo's location on one of the highest points in all of Metro Manila, and its lush growth of trees, provide fresh, cool breezes throughout the year.

Mille Luce

Meaning a "thousand lights" in Italian, Mille Luce offers a 360-degree view of the metropolis and a glimpse of Laguna de Bay, by virtue of its site. The exclusive Italian-inspired enclave is surrounded by an orchard with scores of mango trees and other fruit-bearing varieties, offering a reprieve from the eyesores of the concrete jungle.

Mille Luce provides exclusive amenities and facilities for relaxation while fostering close ties with family and neighbors. Commercial areas can be found within the community for convenience, while the privacy of residents is maintained.

Cottonwoods

A 40-hectare community, Cottonwoods evokes the warm and comfortable ambiance of laid-back American homes, like those commonly found in the state of Maine. The streets of Cottonwoods are lined with mature trees, with white picket fences serving as esthetic highlights rather than dividers of neighbors, while porches with flower beds welcome residents and visitors. CrownAsia developed Cottonwoods around the natural contours of Antipolo, whether flat, downhill, or sloped, to create unique homes with attractive and functional living spaces.

The amenities and facilities at Cottonwoods, such as a fern garden with cobblestone paths and fountains, a butterfly sanctuary, and park with bungalows, complement Antipolo's natural environment. Residents can unwind at the clubhouse, with its bean-shaped pool with slide, basketball and tennis courts, play park and wide jogging trails bound by lush landscaping.

INSPIRED by the laid-back American homes commonly found in the state of Maine, the master's bedroom presents a comfortable retreat at day's end.

A lived-in neighborhood and a community already well-developed, Cottonwoods is now offering its third phase. A newly opened access road leading to Cottonwoods from the Sumulong Highway via Assumption College in Antipolo will cut travel time from Ortigas.

Strategic locations

The strategic locations of Mille Luce and Cottonwoods in Antipolo City put them within a mere 30-minute drive to the commercial and business districts of Ortigas Center and Eastwood, and the recreational areas of Greenhills and Araneta Center via Marcos Highway or Ortigas Avenue. Getting to Makati City only takes 45 minutes.

Mille Luce and Cottonwoods stand out on the roster of master-planned, themed communities of CrownAsia, the country's largest developer of residential communities in which home and lot packages customarily range from P3 million to P5 million. Property previews may be arranged by calling CrownAsia at 634-9001 and 634-9002.

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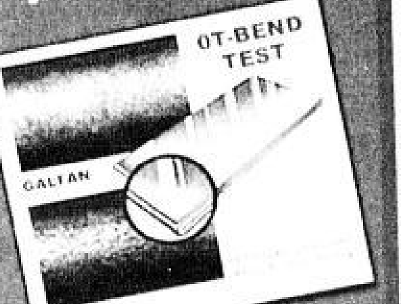

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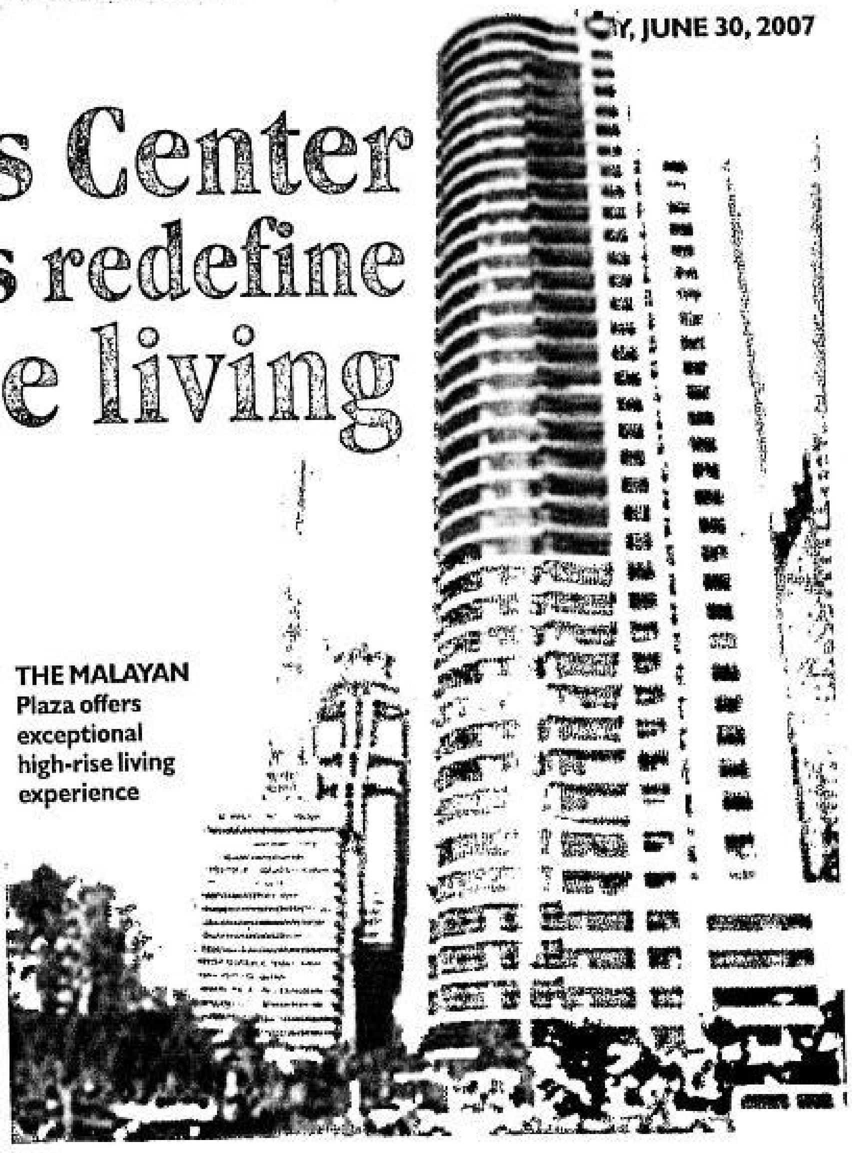
2 Ortigas Center residences redefine high-rise living

By Charles E. Buban


THE MALAYAN Plaza offers exceptional high-rise living experience

GETTING A PIECE OF LAND in Metro Manila is no longer easy but for those who already abandoned their dreams of having their own house, they do find that living in a high-rise building can be equally rewarding.

In a way it's also like investing money into a home, but without the responsibilities of yardwork. In fact, living in a high-rise building could provide an excellent first purchase for a young and single professional, a scale-down for an empty-nester couple or anyone between those two life stages.

"Location is one aspect that attracts homebuyers to consider living in a high-rise residential development. Take The Malayan Plaza for example. This 36-story high-end serviced residence is located within the Ortigas Center, one of the country's fastest growing business and financial hub. One doesn't have to travel far to get to work, shop or even dine. In fact, it's also near schools for those with children," explained Joey Bernardino, VP for sales and marketing of Quantum Hotels and Resorts that manages the building that is owned and developed by Malayan Insurance Co. Inc.

Different

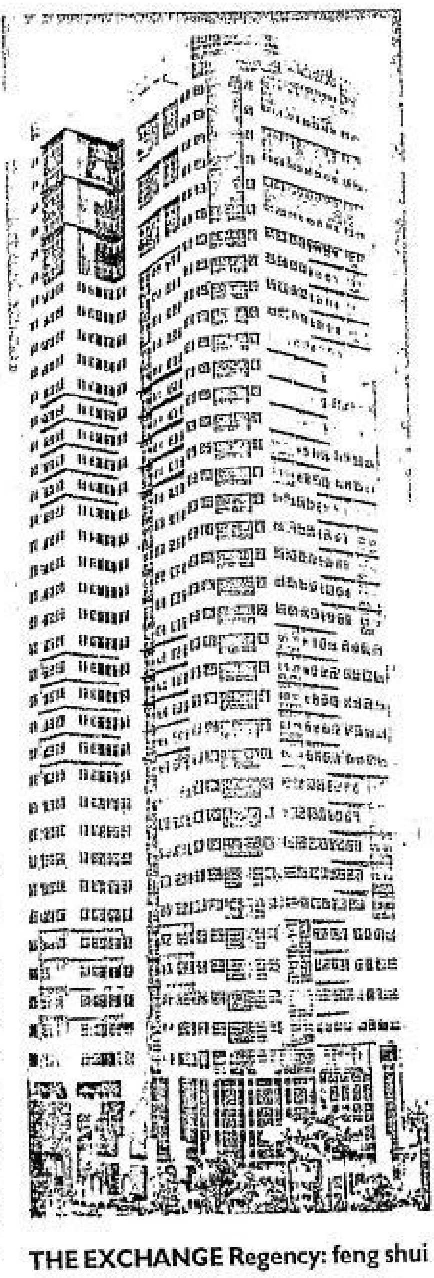
However, The Malayan Plaza is different from most residential developments as it combines that atmosphere of being in a home with exceptional customer service.

"This makes it easier for our residents—mostly business travelers and holiday makers, as well as expatriates on short and extended assignments in Metro Manila to focus on their work," Bernardino said.

Offering 150 elegantly furnished self-contained studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three-bedroom units, The Malayan Plaza is still a typical serviced residence wherein each unit is furnished with a dining area, fully equipped kitchen and separate bedroom(s) not to mention a 24-hour concierge desk, daily maid service and in-house maintenance.

"While giving homely comforts, we also provide them IDD/NDD phones, in-room broadband Internet access and even a helipad for those who really need to go fast," Bernardino shared.

He added that living in a serviced residence is a more viable alternative to hotels, which are simply not practical in a relocation context, and also to long-term private property rentals which can often be restrictive and do not offer a "support network."


THE EXCHANGE Regency: feng shui friendly

Incorporating feng shui

For those who really appreciate high-rise living, another development in the Ortigas Center even incorporated what a number of private home dwellers have been observing—feng shui.

"The Exchange Regency located at the corner of Meralco Avenue, Exchange (Tektite) Road and Jade Drive adopted the infinity symbol or the number eight as its architectural design influence," explained Jonas Senia, general manager of Nobleland, owner and developer of the project.

Senia explained that this 42-story building designed by Asya (Albert S. Yu & Associates) design partner, not only adopted this architectural design because it could maximize living space or allow more viewing directions.

Luckiest number

"In Chinese culture, the figure of eight is considered the luckiest number and is often associated to good luck, good fortune and prosperous living," Senia explained.

Indeed, The Exchange Regency expects homebuyers who are not only drawn to the vibrancy of city living but also those who wanted to bring a sense of balance and well-being to their lives.

"A homebuyer should also consider investing in a property where every element is carefully planned and placed to achieve harmony with nature. At the Exchange Regency we made sure that the chi (refers to all forms of energy and its flow in Chinese culture) will always circulate within the condominium to improve quality of life, health as well as wealth," Senia said.

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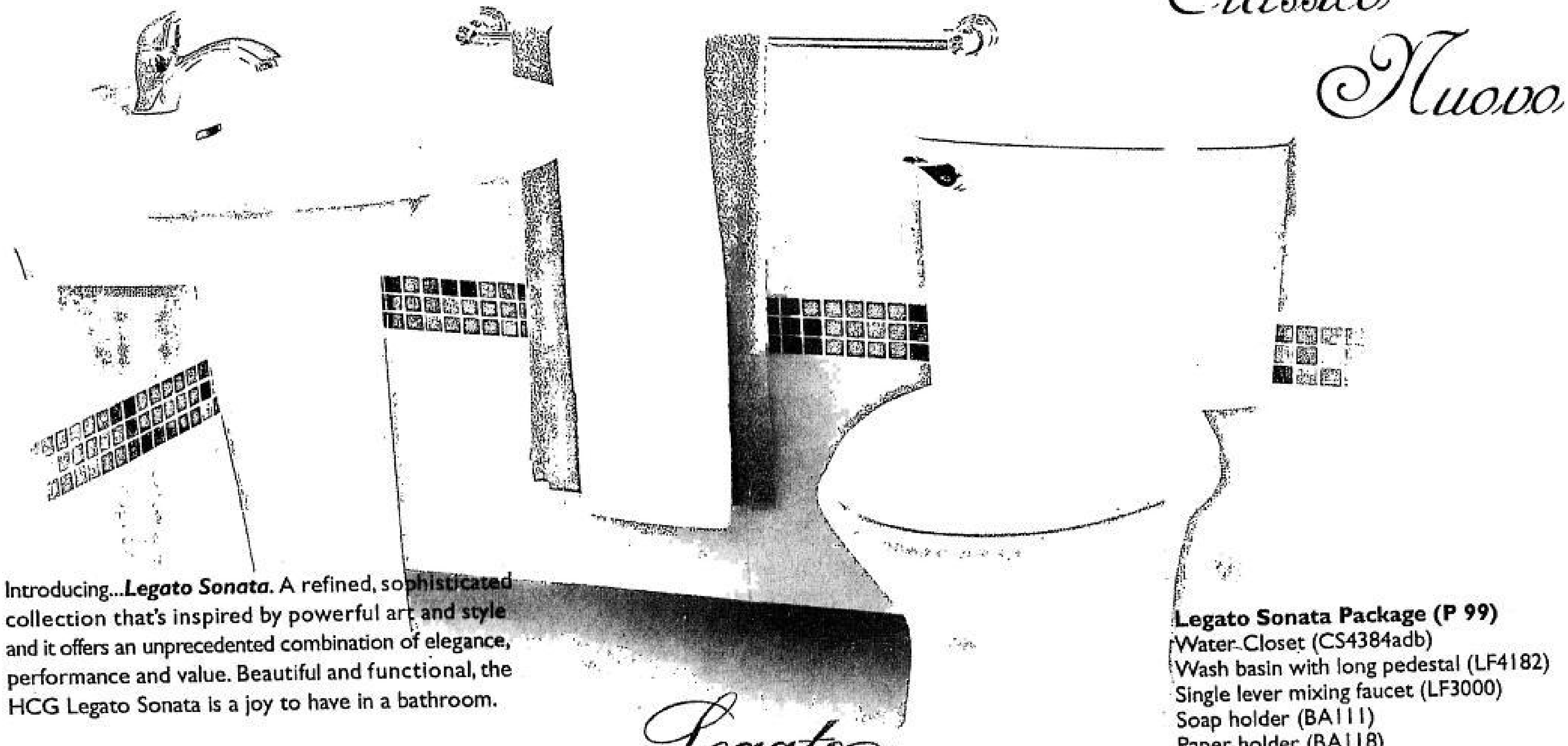

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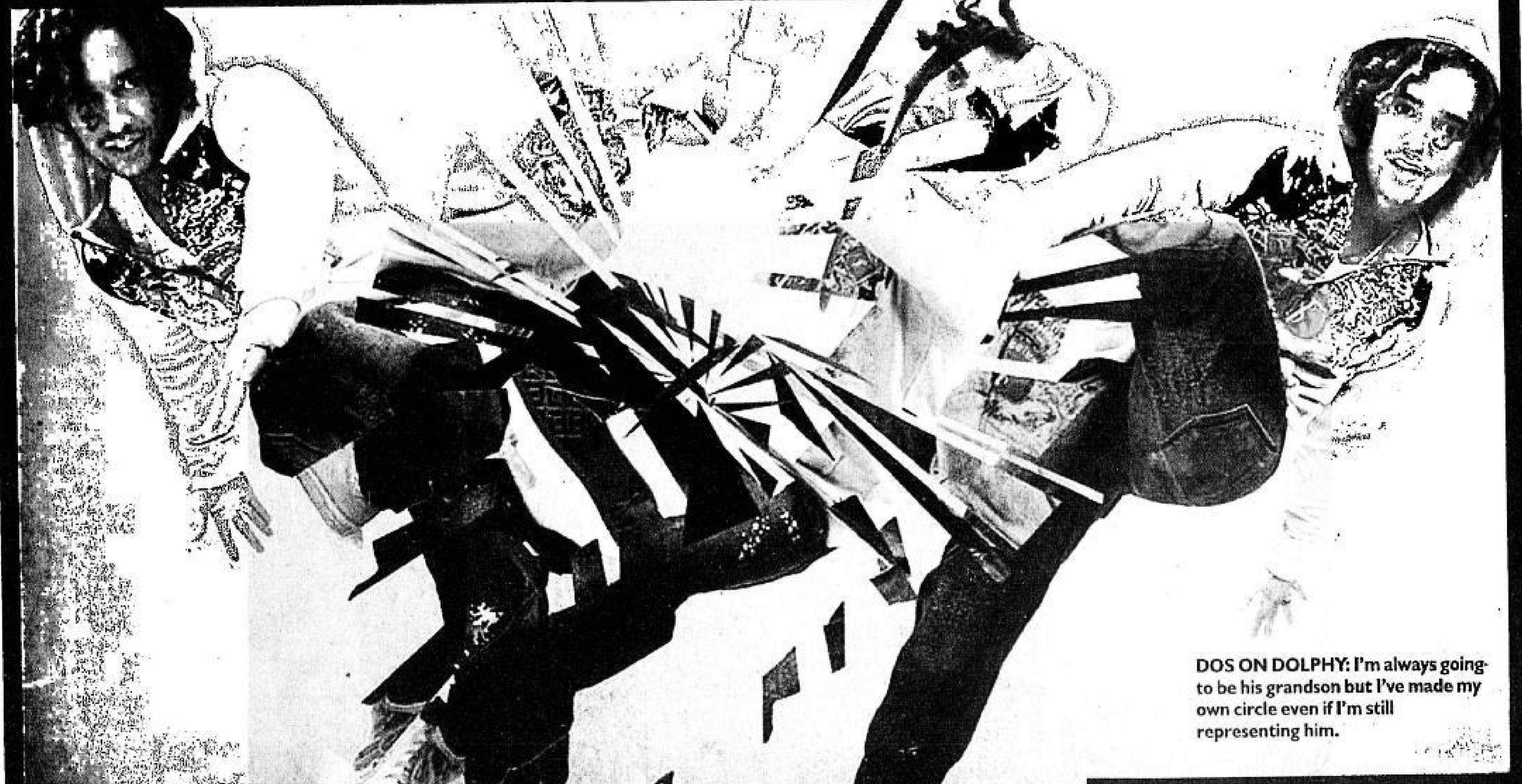
See flyers for details. Promo runs from June 23 to July 30, 2007. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2816. Series of 2007.

DAHIL DITO SMART TAYO

The artist (that will be) formerly known



DOS ON DOLPHY: I'm always going to be his grandson but I've made my own circle even if I'm still representing him.

REGGAE MISTER: Dos is passionate about music too.

By Paolo Lorenzana

LOOKING BACK AT ALL THOSE SCENARIOS I'D CONJURED IN my head, it could have been the hair that fooled me. Boy2 Quizon had just risen from his slumber at 3 p.m. and those dreads—or whatever the elongated spools of nappy hair on his head were—as well as the hipster cred he got from a mock-70's commercial persona and his role as a film-cultivated slacker in pop-indie 8-ball Pinoy/Blonde, gave me the impression that the guy had been out 'til the wee hours probably banging on bongos, discussing the socio-political aspects of post-modern film, and passing J's to a bunch of like-minded buddies.

The guy could be the poster-child of counterculture if you saw him walking down the street. Not some guy who'd caught an acceptable amount of sleep after finishing yet another round of taping for the country's number one primetime show "Lupin," which is what led to his late awakening. Playing opposite man-child-matinee-cupcake Richard Gutierrez, whose fans probably hated Pinoy/Blonde for the same reasons the film's cult following revered it, Boy2's participation in the show is almost anomalous. But then the hair and that irrepressible demeanor that unconsciously marks out its distinction is the reason why a guy like Boy2 can kick it in an arena full of 'Chards and John Lloyds. It's that declaration of freedom that he harbors, even from being a product ballasted into the pubic consciousness by his granddad's robust seed. "I had to leave everything behind—being in the shadow of my grandfather; being the grandson of Dolphy," he says. "*Sa* inner self *ko nangyari na* I had to make a decision to transfer to another network. It was so easy compared to anyone who wanted to be an actor so I wanted to be one of the few who could make it outside the circle. Thing is, I'm always going to be his grandson but I've made my own circle even if I'm still representing him."

Indie-mand

Roaming his grandfather's television and film sets may have given the then 8-year-old an indulgent taste of the camera's attention; a manager like Johnny Manahan, even. But the decision to move from Channel 2 to GMA was an urgent request for autonomy. What followed were the travails of a teen drifting from nights out to the lines of VTRs and into familiar territory with local sketch comedy bonanza "Bubble Gang," until the monolithic telecom company beckoned and July was born.

The Globe commercial gave Boy2 cozy media familiarity. And when Pinoy/Blonde finally reinstated Boy2 as a sort of revolutionary in the face of traditional protagonists with a commercially coated indie vehicle of a film, raking in its share of bickering mob calling out against the film's exhausted pretense yet only exhibiting the natural acting capabilities that flowed in the Quizon bloodstream. The role heralded Boy2 a young insurgent of local cinema; the indie tenability of which can grant the idea of boundlessness in the industry—enough to round up some reggae troops and start a band. GMA records became the platform from which Boy2 took his raga to recording studio. "The reggae scene is about *kahit sinong tao, mag-eenjoy.* It's like the feeling of watching Manny Pacquiao," he explains. "After Manny wins, you could just hug the guy next to you. It's a good way of pulling ourselves forward."

"Biyaheng Reggae," the name of his album, was all about taking that freedom of expression he unleashed in front of a percussion-backed mic to be brought to reggae-receptive places like Mindanao—to unite the people in 'get up-stand up' processions without blood-sucking corporate sponsors. After a sold-out concert that lasted from 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. in the rain, a second one was unfortunately held back by Typhoon "Milenyo" last year, but then primetime lured Boy2 back into the spotlight for a show that he believes in; a clothing brand that he believes in and to pay his dues before he takes us into a promised land of sorts. "I had to take a break after that. *Alam mo yung ginagawa mo na yung gusto mo pero biglang sabi ni* Lord '*relax ka muna, pare.*' I still know what I want, *pero kailangan balanse talaga.*"

DOS 2.0

'Evolve,' 'balance' and 'move forward' are some of the words and phrases Boy2 likes to fling around when he tries to establish where he's at right now and what he wants from an industry like this one. There are two opposing forces that meet halfway when it comes to Quizon's identity: Boy2 being his breastwork of familiarity and the interminable vessel for his movement of unity; Dos, a name his friends call him and the real-time counterpart who's all about the anti-establishment ways to get the people to jive together and support each other—whether it's in the realm of film,

---

Life as a Gen Y cubicle-dweller

As more and more twentysomethings invade offices across the globe, older generations find themselves adjusting to the nuances of a loud, multitasking, optimistic workforce

Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz

DO YOU WATCH "THE Loop"? Chances are, you don't. So allow me to give you a thumbnail description as I do my general happiness whistle and stuff.

Produced by the brains behind "South Park" and "Andy Richter Controls The Universe," "The Loop" is a sitcom about a recent college grad, Sam Sullivan, who gets hired by a struggling airline company based on the supposed strength of his college thesis. The 23-year-old lead dude, played by Bret Harrison (whom you may/may not recognize as Brad O'Keefe, the goofy neighbor kid from "Grounded For Life"), is 30 years younger than anyone in his office. This makes his promotion to high-ranking exec even more of a big deal.

Sprinkled with archetypes you'd typically find at home (a loser brother, roomies who love Annie Lennox karaoke and/or drinking) and at work (the clueless boss, the cougar-like mentor, the sarcastic receptionist), the show brings on the LOLs with its take on post-teen life. The snappy dialogues, juvenile comebacks ("Gaylord!") and funny scenarios (involving pickled eggs and drawn-on bras, for instance) also make each episode awesomely quotable to anyone aged 18-30.

Some twentysomethings have even compared "The Loop" to "Arrested Development," "Curb Your Enthusiasm," and even "Seinfeld." (In terms of the drunk jokes and solid writing, though, I'd peg it as a companion to "How I Met Your Mother." Up top!) As is the fate of all brilliant shows, "The Loop" is set to run for only two seasons on its home network, Fox. I'm only seven episodes deep into Season 1—and downloading the rest as we speak—and I intend to relish "The Loop" before it becomes another ratings game casualty.

Tardy cubicle-dweller

Even though I'm not a recent college grad, I have delayed my entry into the land of gray-colored cubicles long enough to find "The Loop" totally relatable. After a revolving door of mini-jobs and pseudo-corporate encounters, I can say that I am now on the 8-to-5 treadmill (and have been since last October—yay me!), only pausing to do some damage via this column and other forms of creative mind expansion. Who says you can't have it all? But we'll get to that in a sec.

Like Sam, who plays a division head in "The Loop," I'm also a division head who's sorta privy to the inner workings of the airline biz. The day-job me listens to South Korean pilots and air traffic controllers kimchi-fy—that is, uh, mangle—the English language. (I then decide whether their attempts are good enough to keep the East Asian airspace accident-free and mostly intelligible.) Admittedly, the task can make one's ears long for the soothing sounds of nails on a chalkboard, but there are ways to make it fun.

Unlike the sitcom, on the other hand, my workplace has a grand total of three employees with an average age of 25 and we report to a much older superior we only see online. When it comes to management techniques, cultural dynamics, and intergenerational politics, the entire setup has been a huge learning experience for both our baby boomer/Xer boss and the Gen Y section of the office. For now, it's day-job me for the win.

Generation why

By definition, Generation Y refers to those born between 1978 or 1977 and 1990 or 2000, depending on which Google document you choose to believe. Writers have been collectively profiling these Millenials—as you and I are also called—since time immemorial. However, media hyperbole has been more breathless lately because a greater number of us are finally joining the workforce and changing how things run.

As Sarah Pierce writes in Entrepreneur.com, "Gen Y Myths Debunked," there are several blanket misconceptions about the post-college set that need to be contested. "What we discovered is that some of the 'negative' behaviors these young employees exhibit are actually intuitive responses to a changing economy. And if employers want to keep up, they better change, too," Pierce observes.

The first not-so-great comment she helps rebut is that we are disloyal workers. "Despite popular conception, Generation Y employees want to have a long-term relationship with a company," she continues. "But they also want to trust that the company wants to have a long-term relationship with them."

CAREERVIEW MIRROR. In "The Loop," Bret Harrison plays Sam Sullivan, a twentysomething who's trying to balance his social life with a demanding career.

I don't know about you, but my dad and grandparents have been dogging me about being faithful to one company instead of randomly going where the wind takes me. But I always tell them that slaving at a company for 30 to 40 years is a thing of the past; unlike tapered jeans, it may never come back into fashion. There are simply too many options for young people now that specializing in one career for the rest of your life goes against everything we were told as toddlers. That is, that we can be anything we want as long as we work on it. And that leads me nicely to the next point.

High-performing or high maintenance?

Gen Yers have been accused of wanting to fast-track everything, including their careers, without paying their dues. Pierce consulted Bruce Tulgan, co-author of the book "Managing Generation Y," who had this to offer: "It's nonsense to think they don't want to do lots of work. In fact, I think that Gen Yers will absolutely do grunt work—they just want to know, 'OK, I did all this grunt work; what do I get?'"

My own boss has pointed out that I often tend to look at the bottom line (read: the moolah). I have to admit—I am all about the short-term goals. Viewing a so-called career in terms of paychecks and holidays may piss off older managers who spent years climbing the ladder. In the end, though, it's what gets me through the day; I want to make sure that all the work-related stress—the last-minute demands, the overtime droning, the Engrish—is worthwhile and will get me something or somewhere. See, in my hierarchy of needs, I come first before everything else, even this thing called a job. If there's no good reason for me to do something, don't expect me to do it.

The last false impression is based on the two previous ones and deals with the kind of self-esteem our parents instilled in us. "Generation Y has, without a doubt, grown up in a culture of praise, where just about every effort—no matter how small—is rewarded. The media, however, would have you believe these workers need a gold star simply for finding the right parking space," Pierce qualifies.

Okay, I don't expect a banner with blinding neon fonts topped by an exclamation, or a hurricane of Technicolor confetti, every time I do something right in the office. However, I do expect my boss or whoever to recognize my uniqueness and not lump me together with the rest." (Like, eff you. I'm not a commodity! Smiley face.) I work at my own pace and as long as I turn in stuff on time (or ahead, as I often do), it shouldn't matter that I have a dozen non-work-related windows open on my monitor. (Even when I'm slightly hung over, multitasking is not equal to being distracted, not if I get the job done.) Acknowledging that for starters is hardly push-

as Boy2

Photography by MARK NICDAO
Styling by PAM QUIÑONES
Work clothes by SOLO

Its distinction is the reason why a guy like Boy2 can kick it in an arena full of 'Chards and John Lloyds

DOS is Solo's current endorser.

music, or simply nationalism.

There will be the 3-month film program Dos hopes to set off with the help of his quasi-professor and Pinoy/Blonde's regaled director Peque Gallaga. There'll also be the continuing reggae revolution he hopes to continue, this time without the hand of God steadying him for a bit. Pinoy/Blonde may have etched the surface of local films—filmmaking, acting and viewer appreciation, but the 22-year-old knows it was enough to ignite dialogue about the condition of cinema. "It was a push forward for the indie film—that it's possible to make a film that's out-of-the-box *talaga*. But right now, movie-making isn't the place to be. That's the reason they make cheap-ass storylines—'cause they can't risk anymore. They can't afford to make another Pinoy/Blonde or, you know, the movies we want to see. They aren't sure about the market anymore," Boy2 wryly explains of why he backtracked into the breadth of television with Lupin. "*Tapos na para sa 'kin yung* let's fight the system or make our own system. You've got to develop your foundations and *nasa iyo kung paano mo gagawin yun*. Kung sellout *ka*, sellout *ka lang pero kung* sellout ka and at the same time *ginagawa mo yung gusto mo, yun yung proseso para mabago mo yung mga gusto mo*. Boy2 *yung kinalakihan ko pero 'pag nabuo na yung* foundations *ko*, that's the time I could risk using Dos."

The guy can call it constructive 'selling out' and you can always call it the idealism of a 20-something. 'Course in the end, it might just be the hair that will say otherwise.

COMEDY GOLD. "The Loop" is a peek at how different generations deal with work-related issues (and a template on how to BS your way through the day).

ing the praise envelope.

The nuances of a new workforce

Fortune Magazine's Nadira A. Hira also interviewed Bruce Tulgan, who used his wisdom as the founder of leading generational-research firm RainmakerThinking to talk about us.

"This is the most high-maintenance workforce in the history of the world," he tells Fortune. "The good news is they're also going to be the most high-performing workforce in the history of the world. They walk in with more information in their heads, more information at their fingertips—and, sure, they have high expectations, but they have the highest expectations first and foremost for themselves."

They may think Generation Y workers are decorated with electronics and overstimulated, or loud, self-absorbed and overpraised. So what? Is it wrong to be ourselves all over the business world? Before employers and managers demand that we change, maybe they should tell themselves that first. After all, our generation is not going anywhere and we're slowly taking over. I tell you, it's going to be rad. LOL.

MOTOROLA

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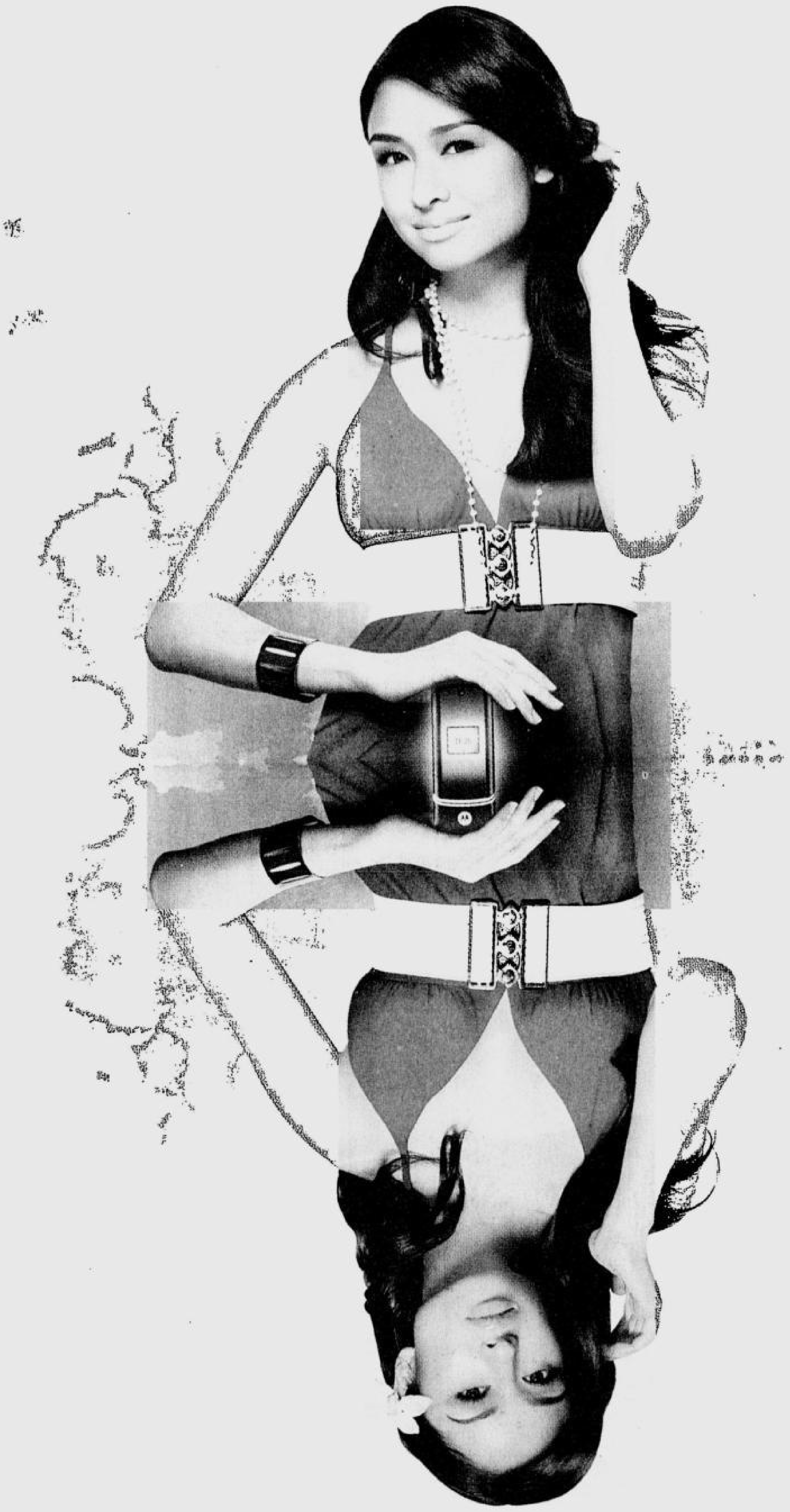

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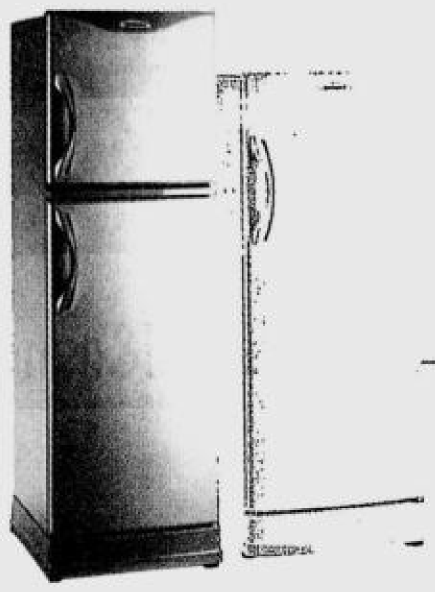
Built Big And Tough For The Filipino Family



Designing For The Filipino Family

Condura prides itself with designing refrigerators for the Filipino family. Filipinos have big families and Filipinos love to eat. On top of that, the refrigerator is also used "pang negosyo", which is a true testament to the enterprising spirit of the Filipino. So Condura had to design a refrigerator that was big and tough enough to withstand the demands of the Filipino family. Condura recently introduced its ALL-NEW 2007 Refrigerators: The Condura Top-of-the-Line Series and the Condura Commercial Series, the first refrigerator designed for business.

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Condura 2007 models come with an exclusive feature called Store More™. Store More™ not only gives you the biggest freezer and chiller available in the market, but also provides a unique space management system to maximize storage space.

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Store More™ provides fully adjustable door racks to properly store items that are uniquely Filipino such make up, medicine, tetra packs, and even big 2-liter softdrink bottles.

Finally, having observed that the Pinoy "water pitcher" is the 2-liter softdrink bottle, Store More™ provides a wire bottle rack that can hold 4 pieces of 2-liter bottles, thereby providing enough cold drinking water for the entire family for the whole day.

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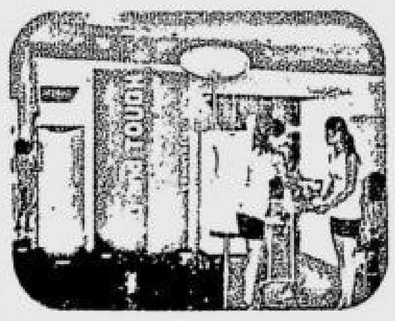

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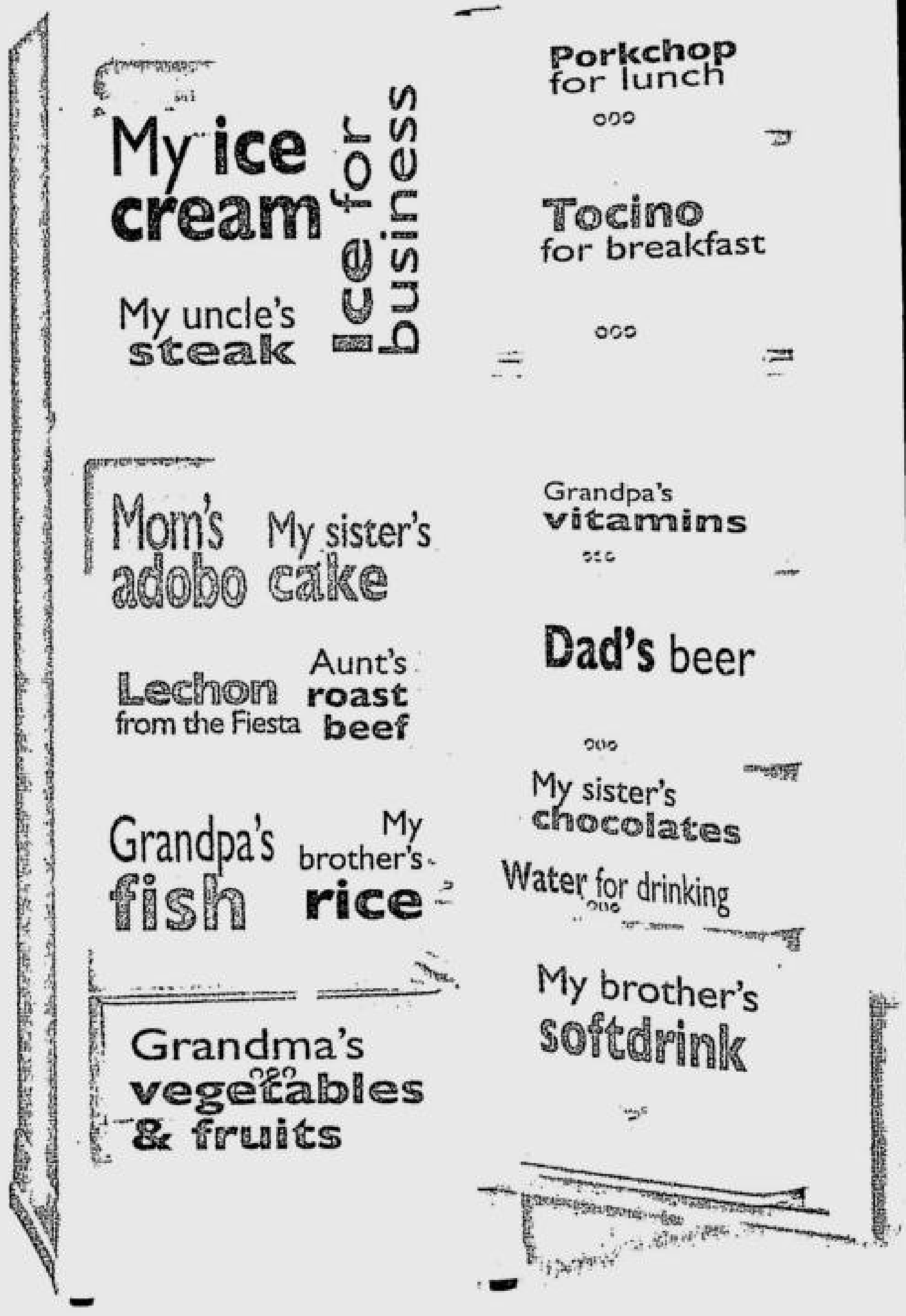

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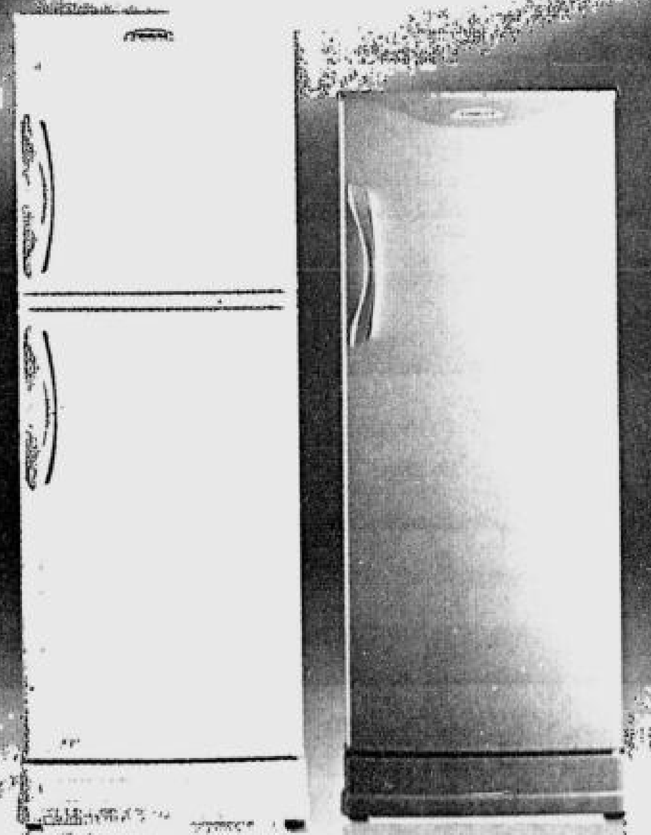

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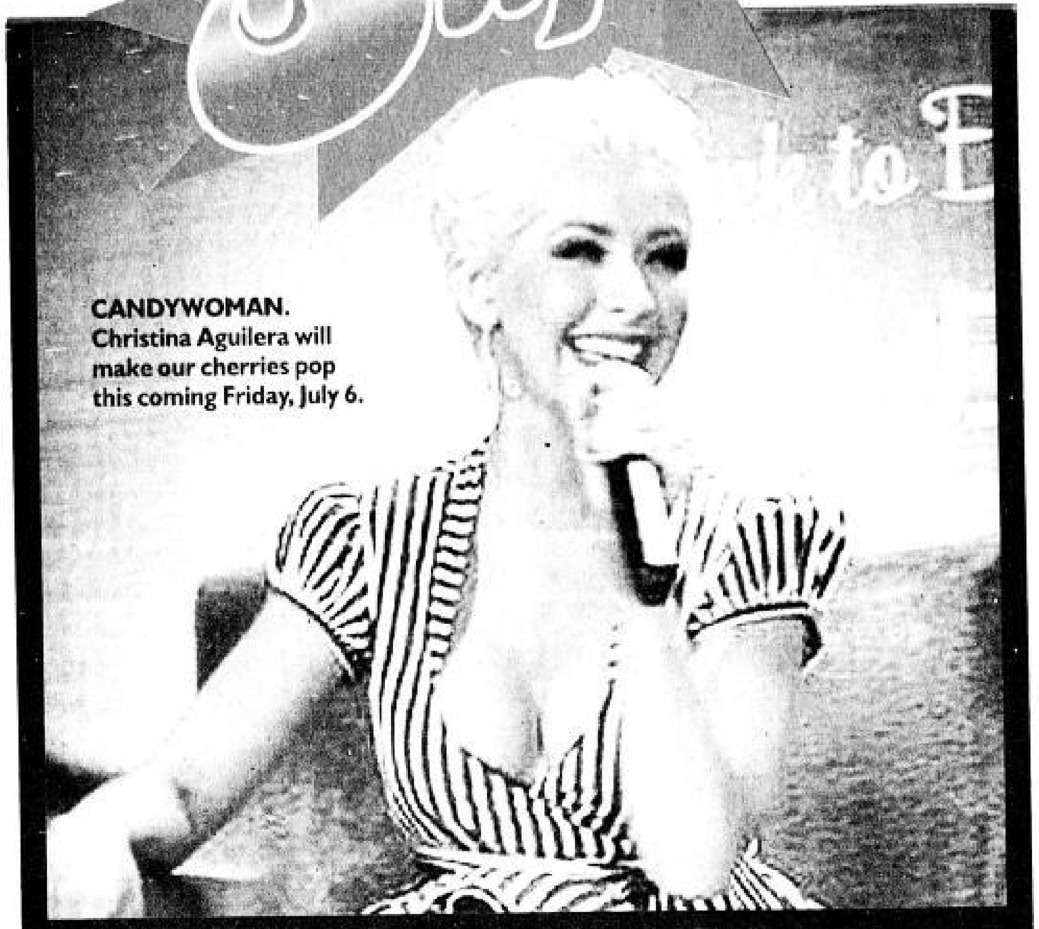

CANDYWOMAN. Christina Aguilera will make our cherries pop this coming Friday, July 6.

Back to basics and beyond

Text and photos by David Milan

"THIS TOUR IS MY MOST INSPIRED tour ever! I'm so excited about it." Yes guys, Christina Aguilera is coming to town in less than a week. Last Tuesday, Super! was there together with MTV when the 4-time Grammy award-winner rocked Mainland China as she performed in front of thousands of both Chinese and foreign visitors at the big-ass Shanghai Grand Stage.

From dirrrty to dainty and clean

Mainland China is known for rejecting foreign artists who get vulgar when it comes to their words and videos. Last year saw Jay-Z being denied by the Chinese government to perform inside the great walls. True to the album and tour's title (Back to Basics), Christina got the go signal of the people and she was full-heartedly welcomed by thousands of fans despite the explicit raunchiness of her last album "Stripped."

The former teen queen, who is rumored to be pregnant, has now shed her old rugged look and has thrown away her shorter than short hot pants. She's now all grown, married and has traded in her long sticky dreads for clean curly blonde locks. Channeling old Hollywood glamour in her new album, Christina took inspiration from the '60's legends and incorporated their tunes to create a more classic and upbeat sound.

Back to basics ... NOT

After her top-selling European tour and a 41-city sold out

BACK/ D2

Back to Basics ASIA TOUR

FIRST LOOK. Super! gives Christina Aguilera two-thumbs up for her concert in Shanghai.

HOME WORLD
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- luminous
- with melody
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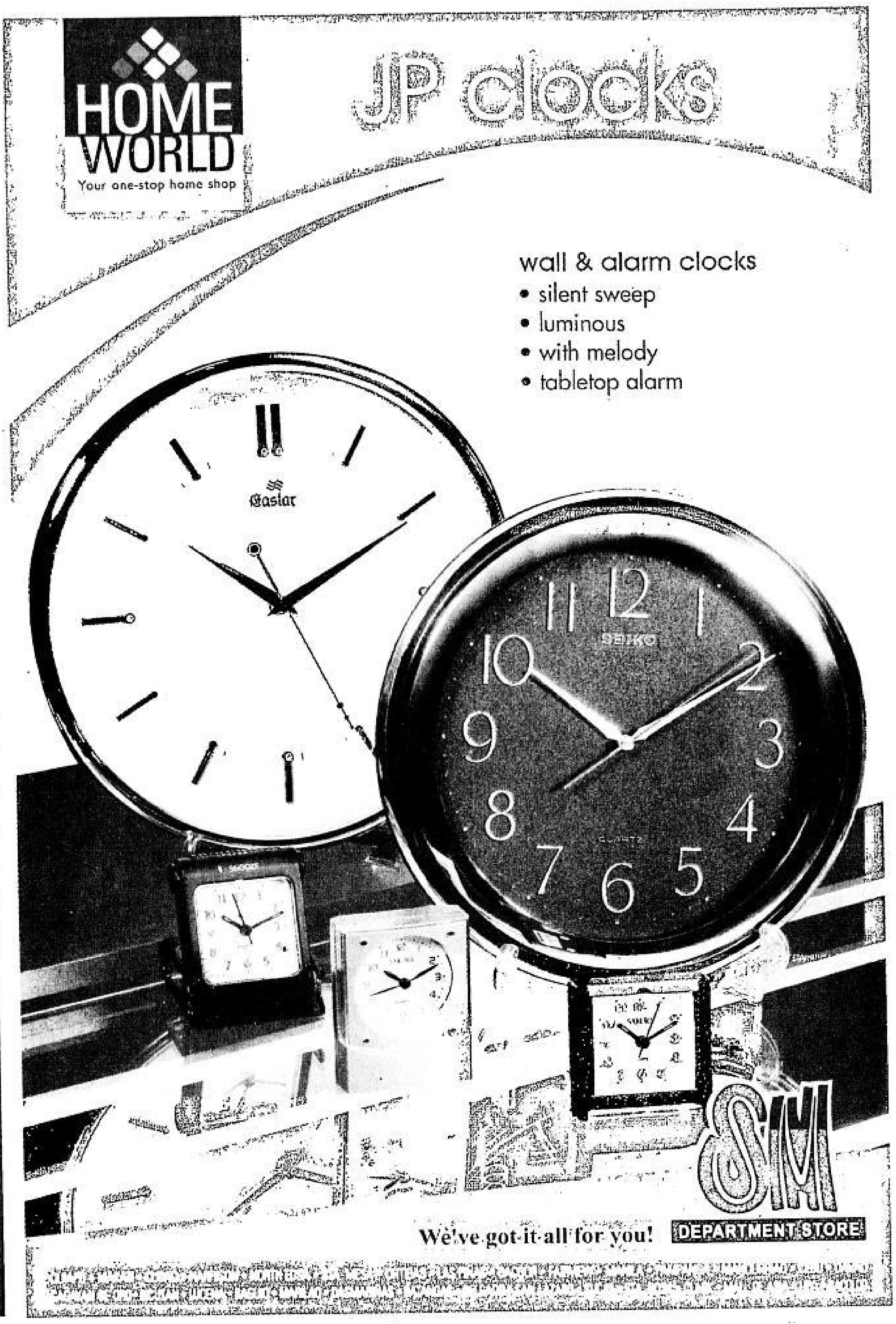

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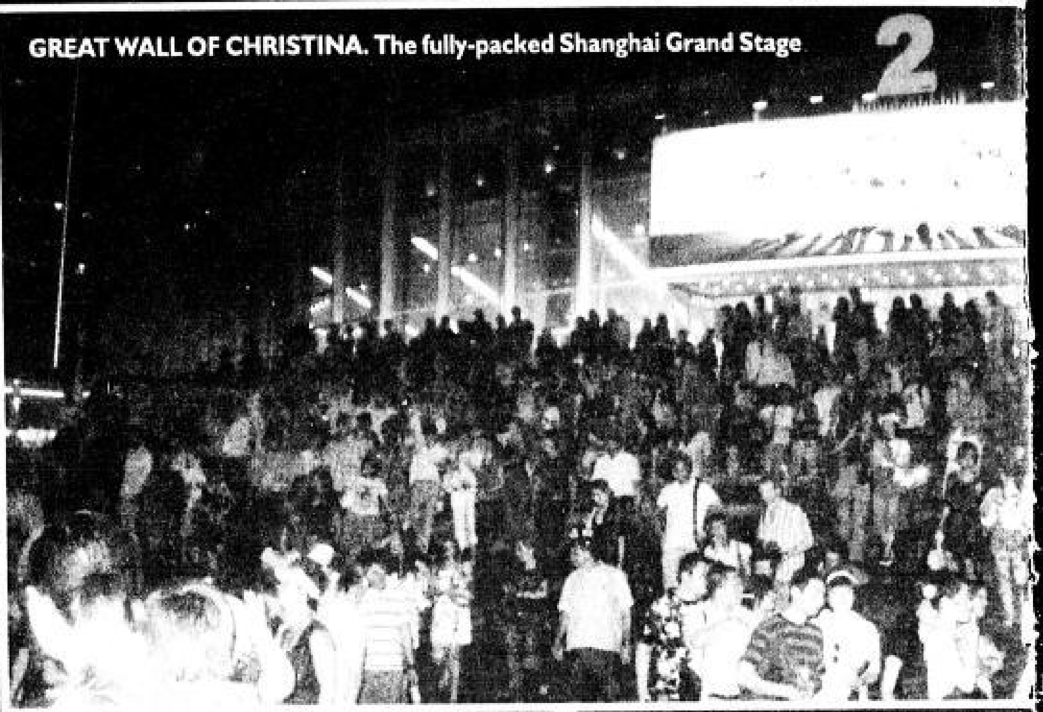
Back to basics and beyond

SHE'S LADY MARMALADE. Christina Aguilera is back to basics.



GREAT WALL OF CHRISTINA. The fully-packed Shanghai Grand Stage

From page D1

US tour, Christina is on top of her game. Famous for having one of the best concert productions, she didn't fail us when she gathered one of the best tour production teams there is. Choreographer and director Jamie King (famous for his work with Madonna [illegible] er Roberto Cavalli, who exclusively provided the [illegible] changes for Christina and the costumes for the dancers, worked together on this tour to combine modern pop and old-Hollywood glam. The people were wowed by the stage that has 600 [illegible] state-of-the-art hydraulic system and a huge screen that played videos, made by [illegible] clusively for the tour, in between song numbers.

She makes our cherry pop

Christina has received so many awards worldwide—and there's no doubt that she definitely [illegible] ing an all out performance during her concert, running backstage to change costumes after each song, her powerful voice never failed and she dazzled the crowd with her fantastic stage presence.

Her backup dancers didn't want to be upstaged either—they stretched every single muscle they have with their routine and stunts.

The 8,400-seater Shanghai Grand stage was packed with people of all kinds and of all ages—families, friends and couples. Crossing linguistic borders, the people of Shanghai sang along with Christina as she performed many of her hit songs. She thanked the many people who came to the concert and as a return, she was given a standing ovation by the crowd. Going back to basic is definitely good for Christina. And we definitely want to see more of that when she hits town this coming Friday.

Christina Aguilera: Back to basics tour live in Taguig is presented by Globe in association with MTV Philippines. July 6, 2007, Friday, Bonifacio Global City Open Field, 7:30 p.m. For tickets, contact Ticketworld at 8919999 or www. ticketworld.com. For more info, tune in to MTV Philippines on Sky Cable Channel 57, log on to www.mtvphil.com or text AGUILERA to 2222.

Going back to basics is good for Christina, We definitely want to see more of that when she hits town this coming Friday

FEW OF THE MANY OUTFITS CREATED BY ROBERTO CAVALLI EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE

Christina up close

AMID GOSSIP COLUMN SPECULATIONS that she is over nine weeks pregnant, 26-year-old pop superstar Christina Aguilera continues to press on with her "Back to Basics" World Tour. The Asian leg of her tour began in Osaka, Japan last June 18 and will culminate with her first-ever Philippine concert next Friday.

Reinventing herself after the audacious sexuality of her sophomore album, "Stripped," the four-time Grammy winner decided to embrace a more mature image by sporting an Old Hollywood look and bleaching her locks platinum blonde. "Back to Basics" pays tribute to the music that has molded Aguilera, adding a modern twist to vintage tunes with her vocal acrobatics and fast-stomping choruses.

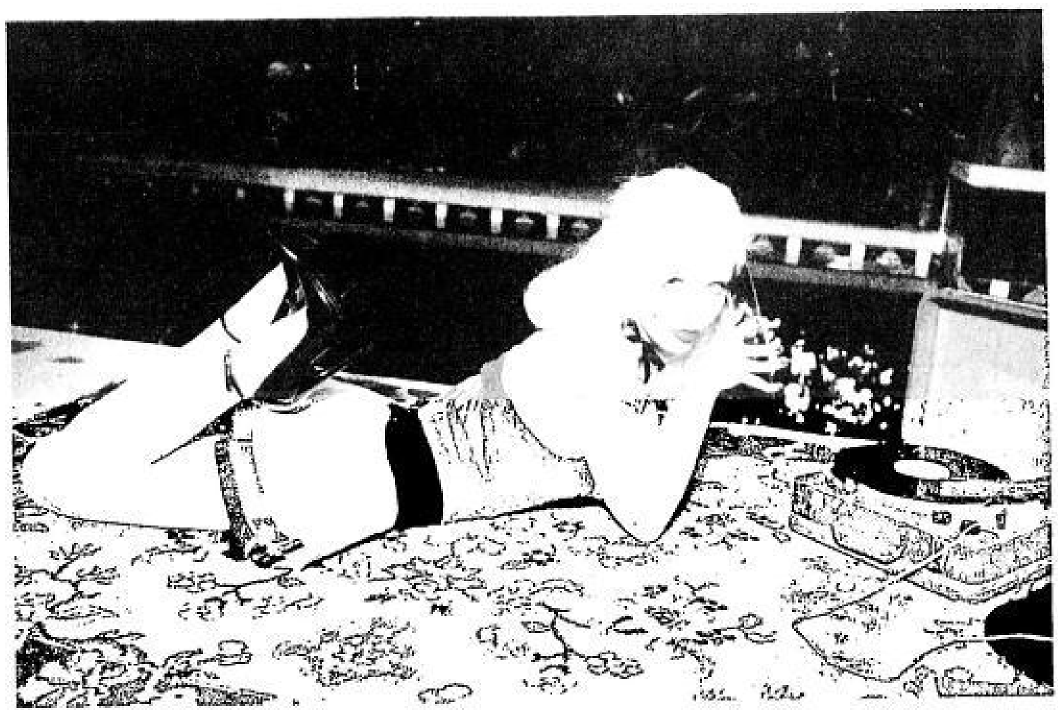
Complete with an armada of vintage-inspired outfits designed by Roberto Cavalli, her upcoming show will feature a jazz and blues emphasis, paying homage to musical legends such as Billie Holiday and Aretha Franklin. The petite powerhouse takes center stage on July 6 at the Bonifacio Global City Open Field. Tickets are priced at P7,350 (VIP), P3,675 (Patron), and P1,050 (General Admission). Call 891-9999 or visit ticketworld.com.ph.

Cutting-edge clubbing

Clubbing constantly craves new ideas, and that's what the "Rewired" nights at Warehouse 135 [135 Yakal St., Makati City, phone: 887-0526] are all about. At the forefront of this innovation are veteran DJs who consistently play new music: Adrian Cuenca, Funk Avy, Houseboy, Lady Trinity, James Bald 008, Mulan, and Travis Monsod. Get ready to experience the sound of cutting-edge dance music, from electro to techno and everything else in between. The "Rewired: Reconnecting Manila Clubbing" series will take place on July 7, July 14, August 4, and August 18. Visit rewiredmnl.multiply.com.

24/7

Paolo R. Reyes
Janine Cuenca-Dario



More Super! 24/7 events:

June 30, Saturday

Back to Love, Back to ABG's! feat. DJs Erwin Edralin, Kevin Ruiz, Patch, and a live performance by Mackey M. at Warehouse 135; Universal Reality Combat Championship (URCC) X feat. Allan Co vs. Eduard Folayang and Richard Lasprilla vs. Kevin Belingon at the NBC Tent, Bonifacio Global City (7 p.m.); The Annual White Party at Bed; Orange & Lemons, Spaceflower Show, & Pin-Up Girls at Mag:net Café (Bonifacio High Street); High School Musical at Meralco Theater; Piagonda Launch at Embassy Club; DJs Karl Ty & Marie Garcia at Fiamma; House of Soul w/ DJs Benjo Marquez & Jason Soong at Nuvo; Siesta w/ Soundsgood DJs at Embassy Cuisine; Cynthia Alexander at Conspiracy Café; Rouge: Lounge in Color at M Café; DJs Jon Herrera & Tolo Bote at Temple; Guarana at Café Havana Greenbelt; House Music at Mezze; DJs Scratchmark & Bliss at Prince of Jaipur; Arriba at Café Havana Malate; Gogo Weekend at Bed; Flintstones at Merk's; K 24/7 at Tropezz

July 1, Sunday

ZsaZsa Zaturnnah at RCBC Plaza; High School Musical at Meralco Theater; 3rd Virgin Labfest at CCP; Mariel & Marissa de Leon-Lopa exhibit at Mezze; Amorsolo retrospective at UP Vargas Museum; Terry Berkowitz: Malaya Lolas at CCP Main Gallery; Nuevo Ritmo at Café Havana Greenbelt; Brunch Affair w/ Concertino at Azzurro Linden Suites; US Marine Forces Pacific Band in Concert at SM Mall of Asia (Main Mall); Red, White & The Blues at SM Mall of Asia (Piano Area); Jazz Sunday Brunch at M Café

July 2, Monday

ZsaZsa Zaturnn
RCBC Plaza; Happy
w/ Borgy Manotoc
bassy Cuisine; Blu
Martinis Bar; Arriba
Havana Greenbelt; I
Mondays! w/ DJ RO
Makati; Chemical Un
at Absinth; Retro Ni
zurro Linden Suites ;
fair at Merk's

July 3 , Tuesday

Cuisine Royale w/
Dario at Embassy Cu
Mag:net Café (Bo
Street); Deep Space f
Marquez & Jason Soo
Club; Electronica Ni
80s & 90s Night w/
ple

Jazz Night at Mez
DJ Patch at Absinth;
Havana Greenbelt; O
Piano Nights at Azzu
& Souled Out at Merk

July 4, Wednesday

House of Soul w/
son Soong at Fez; Re
135; W Wednesdays
Ocampo at Embassy
Concert & Grand;
Mall of Asia (Music
at Fiamma; DJs Mars
Embassy Club; Mis

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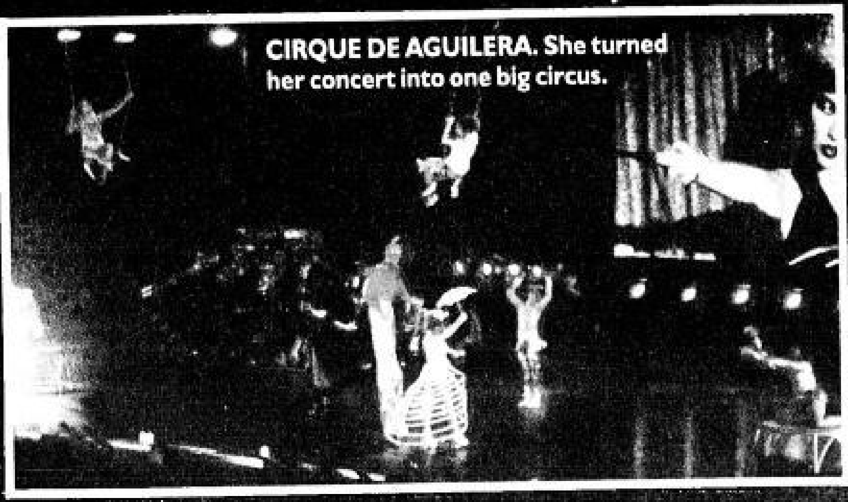
OBLATION. Christina received a standing ovation from the crowd.



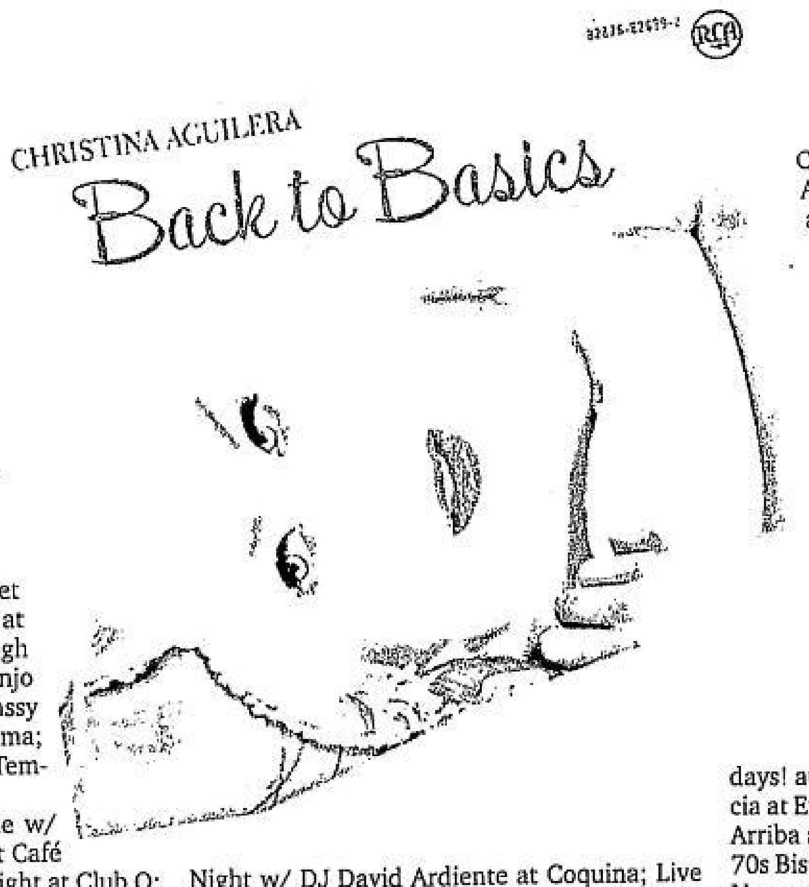
CIRQUE DE AGUILERA. She turned her concert into one big circus.

SHE'S GOT BACK. Christina and her candymen

THE CONCERT was A++

HER DANCERS and band crew

TOUR



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o Linden Suites; Aretha

DJs Benjo Marquez & Ja-
o Classics at Warehouse
w/ DJs Karl Ty & Cao
Cuisine; Fourth of July
reworks Display at SM
all); Lush: Smooth Rn'B
Miranda & Johnyverse at
mash at Absinth; 90s

Night w/ DJ David Ardiente at Coquina; Live Rock Bands at Temple; DJs Kimozave & Chrismyx at Prince of Jaipur; Arriba at Café Havana Greenbelt ; Merk & Friends at Merk's

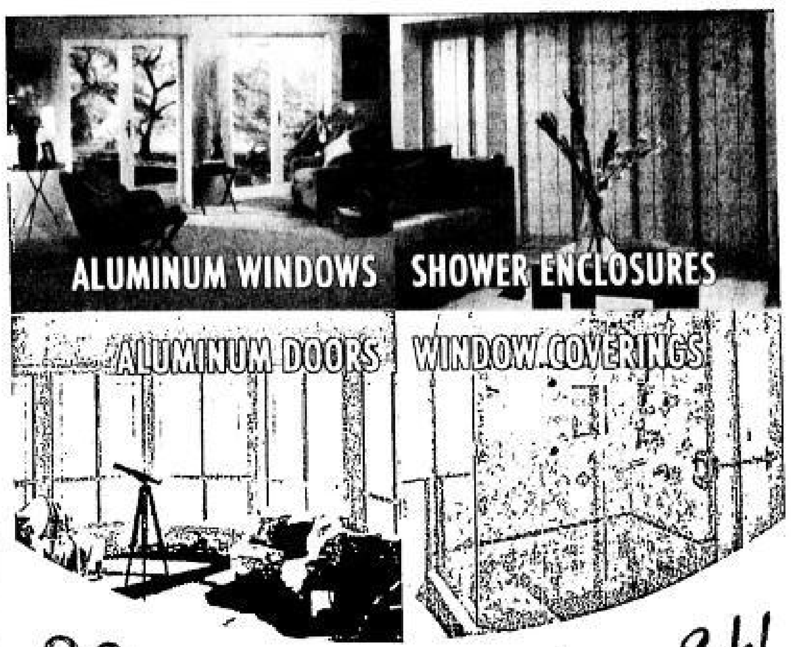
July 5, Thursday

Fabric: Fashion Night /w Jermaine Brown at Piedra; Latin Night w/ Tribo Manila at Mezze; Fluxxe: Whatever Thursdays at Absinth; Reggae Mistress at Café Havana Greenbelt; Backtrack Thursdays at Club O; Radio Coquina at Coquina; Open Mic Night at Azzurro Linden Suites; World's Fastest Open Bar at Bed; US Catalog Show at SM Mall of Asia (Piano Area); The Groove at Merk's; BluRoom at Martinis Bar

July 6, Friday

Christina Aguilera: Live! at the Bonifacio Global City Open Field; Jessica Zafra: Contra Frida Kahlo at Instituto Cervantes; Destination: Bossa Live! at Captain's Bar; House of Soul w/ DJ Jason Soong at Alchemy; Chill by the Bay at SM Mall of Asia; FunkFry at Mezze ; Sala Ibiza w/ DJ Karl Ty at Nuvo; Elektro Disko w/ DJ Adrian Cuenca & Ms. BadKiss at M Café; DJs Mark Naval & Owens Sun at Embassy Club; Decadance w/ DJ Boyet Almazan at Jill's; House Sessions at Fiamma; DJ David Ardiente at Coquina; MILF: Mom I Love Fridays! at Absinth; Soul Shine w/ DJ Marie Garcia at Embassy Cuisine; Jive Fridays at Temple; Arriba at Café Havana Greenbelt; The Jerks at 70s Bistro; DJ Scratchmark at Prince of Jaipur; Nuevo Ritmo at Café Havana Malate; Drag-on! Fridays at Bed; US Catalog Show at SM Mall of Asia (Piano Area); Route 70 at Merk's

Schedules may change without prior notice. For a complete listing of events, text 24/7 GIGS through your mobile phone and send to 2851 (Globe) and 2951 (Smart). Submit your schedules before Tuesday to events@mag24-7.com & mag24_7@yahoo.com. Vote now for the 24/7 Nocturnal Awards 2007! Log on to www.mag24-7.com/awards for details.



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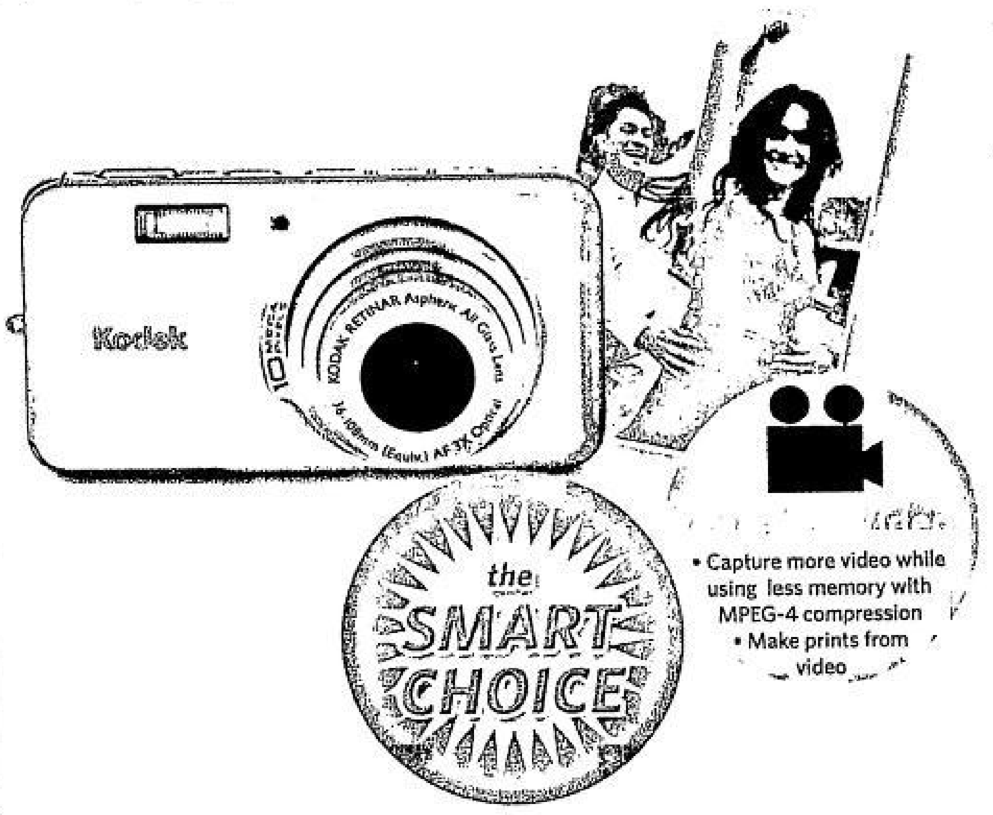
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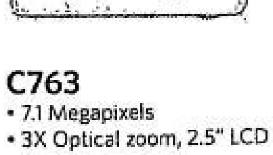

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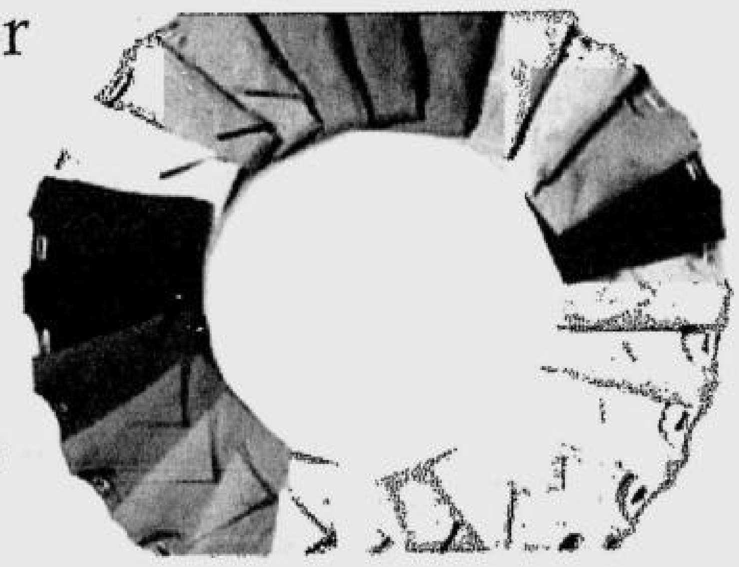
Fall for Giordano All Over Again

Giordano's evolutionary timeline is peppered with iconic symbols (who could forget the ubiquitous frog logo?), retail firsts, and clothing items and accessories that have cornered the market for stylishly simple basics.

From its beginnings as a local Hong Kong manufacturer of casual clothing in the early 80's, Giordano grew into Asia's biggest and best-known clothier. The 90's sparked a craze with everyone sporting the brand's trademark polo in every color imaginable. Giordano has since gone global positioning itself as a cross-cultural brand with a stake on "simplicity" and so far, the strategy has simply been a success.

With its campaign, World Without Strangers, and upcoming Denim Fall runway show, Giordano injects a fresh and modern spin to the classic and contemporary line of clothing that has made it a household name. Here's a look at the signature styles that made us fall for Giordano as well as a sneak peek on what to watch out for.



GIORDANO

Denim Fall

COLLECTION

world without strangers

FASHION SHOW

Directed by
AUDIE ESPINO
of Runway Productions

6:30 PM
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Pavilion Mall, Biñan, Laguna • Robinson's Lipa • CSI La Union • Stern Mall, Ilocos Sur • SM Baguio • SM Marilao • SM Pampanga • SM Clark • CSI Dagupan City • NE Pacific Mall, Cabanatuan
Robinson's Place, Bacolod City • Mindpro Citimall, Zamboanga City • Chimes Davao • SM City, Cebu City • Ayala Center, Cebu City • SM Cagayan de Oro City • Limketkai Cagayan de Oro City • SM Davao

The Classic-T

Initially building its name around this versatile top, Giordano produced the crew neck and v-neck shirts in a myriad of color incarnations, making the Classic-T a veritable wardrobe staple.

The Polo

The breathable Dry Polo for men and the snug Skinny Polo for women gained popularity as well as a spectrum of color choices. Fashionably casual, the Giordano Polo has come to personify all things preppy and coc

Denim Jeans

Giordano's got the Blues. The brand's signature denims feature over 7 great fits, a variety of cuts, styles and washes.

WORLD
WITHOUT
STRANGERS

Linen Separates

Keeping it cool. Giordano mastered the laid back look with its line of linen tops, pants, drawstrings, and khakis.

World Without Strangers

As a World Brand, Giordano has no center, knows no natural borders, is cross-cultural and owned by all consumers. Wherever you are in the world, Giordano is the brand for you.

Giordano leapfrogs around the globe.

The brand has expanded to a network of over 1,800 retail outlets in Greater China, Southeast Asia, Japan, Korea, Middle East, Australia, India, Canada, and recently in the United States.

Advt'l.

Super
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CHEERING SQUAD. (from left) Chrissie Capicoy, Jason Doplito, Fifi Capicoy, Pam Pastor, Jill Lejano, Ram De Vera and Giff Ricarte

PANORAMA. Manu Sandejas at the Manila Clock Tower

Diary of a wireless adventure

Nokia's N95 Wireless Adventure was not just meant to showcase the features of a fantastic new phone, they wanted to inspire people to fall in love with their city once again

By Pam Pastor

FUNNY HOW I NEVER SEEM to learn my lesson.

A few months ago I managed to turn the mall race I joined into a freak show by making a complete fool of myself - first by almost throwing up when we were asked to drink a can of diet soda, then by practically inhaling the spaghetti, chicken and garlic bread in the eating leg and then by changing the definition of the term "ice skating." (I call it Hoisting Yourself Onto the Rail And Using It To Propel Yourself Forward Cursing The Entire Time While Trying Not To Fall Down And Pretending Everyone Around You Is Blind And Can't See How Stupid You Look.) My most vivid memory of that day was wondering why I had not dropped dead in the middle of Megamall yet. Yeah, I'm always eager to prove to the world how out of shape I really am.

But when I was told that the Nokia N95 Soul of Manila Wireless Adventure will not be a physically challenging race, that we don't even have to wear sporty clothes, I didn't think twice about joining. After all, I had declared 2007 as a year for adventures and taking risks. And besides, the prospect of rediscovering Manila's soul sounded mighty appealing to me.

The teams

My partner was bag designer and young mom Amina Aranaz-Alunan. We were competing against nine other teams, a mix of personalities and Nokia fans—Manu Sandejas and Michelle Aguas, Jay Server and Jennifer Juco, Tim Tayag and Kathy Moran, Jaime Daez and Jane Chua, Rovilson Fernandez and Carlos Suerte Felipe, Patty Laurel and Stephen Ang, Cat Juan and Ed Capulong, Pam Quinones and Glenn Warren Flores and Rorie Carlos and Paolo Manzano.

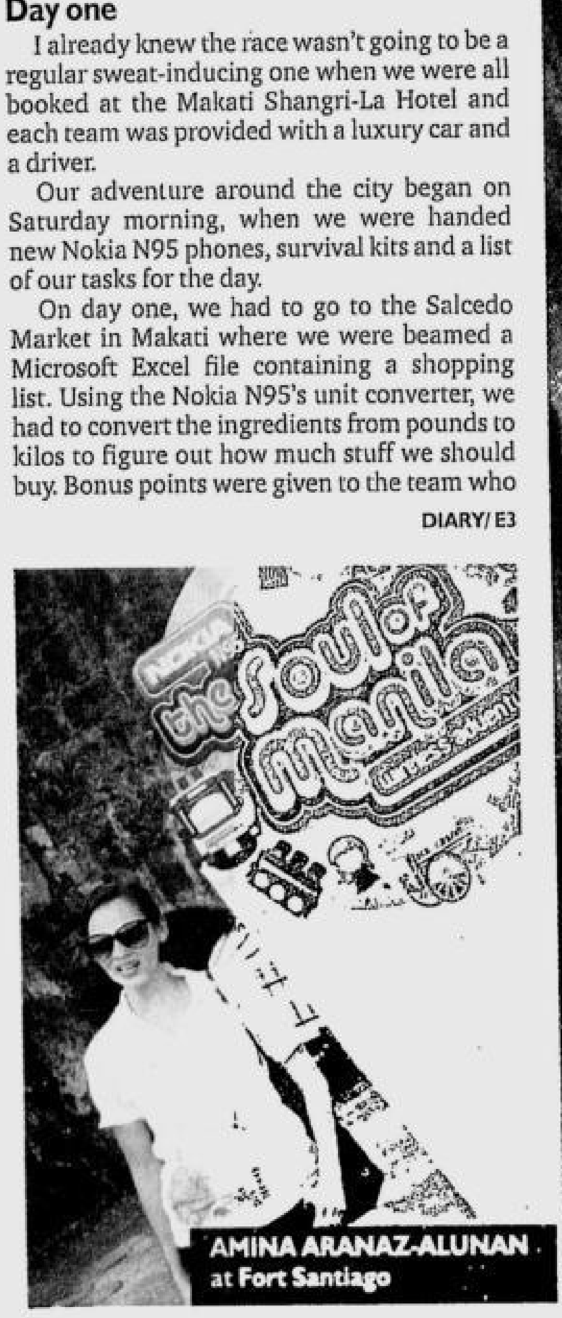
Day one

I already knew the race wasn't going to be a regular sweat-inducing one when we were all booked at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel and each team was provided with a luxury car and a driver.

Our adventure around the city began on Saturday morning, when we were handed new Nokia N95 phones, survival kits and a list of our tasks for the day.

On day one, we had to go to the Salcedo Market in Makati where we were beamed a Microsoft Excel file containing a shopping list. Using the Nokia N95's unit converter, we had to convert the ingredients from pounds to kilos to figure out how much stuff we should buy. Bonus points were given to the team who

DIARY/ E3



AMINA ARANAZ-ALUNAN at Fort Santiago

NOKIA
True style is being natural.

© 2007 Nokia. The display resolution shown here may vary from that displayed by the actual product. The phone screen displayed here is not the default screen setting.

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Intercontinental Manila presents 'Elements of Style'

INTERCONTINENTAL MANILA, MAKATI'S premier deluxe hotel, is staging "Elements of Style: A Celebration of All Occasions" on July 29 and 30.

This all-occasions fair is specially designed for the hotel's discerning socials and corporate clientele. "Elements of Style" will bring together the best mix of quality vendors and suppliers showcasing innovative year-round event requirements - from the most exclusive private social engagements to the grandest high-profile public events.

Unlike other fairs, this pioneering event is envisioned as a collaborative effort between InterContinental Manila and all its event planners. The hotel will be opening up its newly renovated function rooms and event venues to allow its select partners to apply and showcase their respective expertise and exceptional creativity in designing a "model set-up." This will allow the public to appreciate better their stylish and innovative concepts as applied in an actual set-up.

Other eagerly anticipated events include short lectures from style experts, the much talked about Celebrity Bridal and Debut Gowns exhibit at its posh lobby, hourly raffle of prizes and giveaways, and a Fashion Show.

For inquiries and to reserve an exhibit space, please call InterContinental Manila's events organizer, Aleph One Manila, at telefax number 535 5428 and look for Karleen Soriano or call the hotel at tel. 815-9711 loc. 215 and look for Eve Verzola.

TEA PARTY FAVORITES AT THE MANILA PAVILION HOTEL

Patisserie is serving this June two afternoon delights both kids and grown-ups couldn't resist. Sweeten those afternoon tea parties with your much-loved Kiddie Cakes and Biscotti. Certified kiddie favorites, Patisserie Kiddie Cakes are decorated with candies, chocolate in swirl or cone shapes and colorful icings just the way kids want them. One whole cake is priced at P850+++. And while the youngsters have their fill of sugary treats, grown-ups can talk over a cup of coffee or tea paired with good 'ol Granny's Biscotti. Available in plain or vanilla, Granny's Biscotti is baked from an original recipe straight from Italy hence, preserving the traditional biscotti texture and crunchiness. Patisserie is open daily from 7 a.m. to 12 mn. For inquiries and orders, please call Manila Pavilion Hotel at 526-1212 extension 2326.

Chili's serves two favorites in one!

CHILI'S BAR AND RESTAURANT AMPS UP the yum factor by turning two of its crowd favorites into one hearty dish.

Chili's new Fajita Nachos stacks its famous fajita steak or chicken with grilled onions and bell peppers on corn tostadas with cheese, beans, jalapeños, pico de gallo and sour cream.

As always, Chili's new two-in-one dish comes in to-be-shared portions that are sure to be a new favorite among friends and beer buddies.

In addition, there are over 50 menu items to choose from and enjoy including their famous Big Mouth Burgers and don't forget the Presidente & Flavored Margaritas that's been the toast of the town for years.

So drop by Chili's today with friends and family to enjoy what you love best and their yummy new two-in-one Fajita Nachos. Or call to inquire about their special party packages. Chili's is located at Missouri cor. Nevada Sts. in Northeast Greenhills (tel. 727-2959); Greenbelt 1 in Ayala Center, Makati (tel. 812-0225); and Tomas Morato in Quezon City (tel. 372-5017).

PLAYA CALATAGAN HOSTS METRO-ACTIVE MAGAZINE'S EVENT

Playa Calatagan, the Philippines' first leisure-tourism estate designed amid the beaches of Calatagan in Batangas, recently hosted a set of summer activities for Metro Active Magazine of ABS-CBN Publishing Inc. Backed by sponsors and partners, Playa Calatagan and Metro Active Magazine jointly organized various summer activities including beach volleyball, kayaking, cable boarding, kite boarding, wake boarding, wall climbing, and ultimate Frisbee. In Playa Calatagan, visitors can take leisurely walks and enjoy the seascape along the Beach Promenade. Residents can swim in the 800-square meter river pool or bond with their little tykes in the kiddie pool. Playa Calatagan's amenities will include vacation residences, hotel accommodations, retail stores, a host of shopping, dining, and entertainment venues, and a variety of recreational options.

Subic Holiday for all seasons

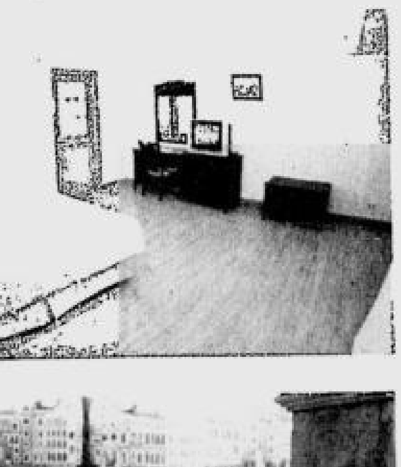
COME RAIN OR SHINE, A WEEKEND STAY or for as long as months, the Subic Holiday Villas provides the comfortable and cozy home away from home.

Strategically located at the heart of the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, the Italian-inspired Subic Holiday Villas is a five-minute drive to the industrial zone, and is 15-minutes away from the beaches of Subic, as well as its entertainment areas and tourist destinations.

Subic Holiday Villas offers a wide variety of fully furnished rooms - from studio units to one-bedroom and two-bedroom suites. The suites extend to balconies, while the kitchens are ready with refrigerator, stove, microwave/toaster oven, glassware, cutlery and crockery. Each unit is equipped with cable network television, individually controlled air-conditioning, and hot and cold water in the elegantly tiled bathrooms. Guests at the Subic Holiday Villas can enjoy facilities for rest and relaxation such as the tropical swimming pool and wading pool in the fountain area, a fitness center, and walking and jogging path. As a convention site, Subic Holiday Villas provide conference areas, along with indoor and outdoor function rooms.

Avail of the introductory preferred rates Subic Holiday Villas still is offering on its exceptional units. Book the Studio Superior for P3,500 net per room per night; a One-Bedroom Suite is P4,700 net per room per night; and a Two-Bedroom Suite is for P6,000 net per room per night. This rate is inclusive of breakfast for two for the studio and one-bedroom package and breakfast for four for the two-bedroom package. Guests availing of these rates are also given free use of the swimming pool, gym, and the Villas' other recreational facilities.

For inquiries and reservations, contact 864-0941 or e-mail Quantum Hotels and Resorts at sales@quantumsuites.com or check website at www.quantumsuites.com.



A sense of the exceptional at the New La Gondola

WATERFRONT CEBU CITY HOTEL AND CASINO'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT NOW serves up a whole new dining experience after a quick two-month renovation. The new La Gondola offers fresh interiors with rustic ivory stone walls and pillars, and a beautiful picture of gondolas on one wall that are accented by deep blue neo-classical curtains, effortlessly achieving a distinctly stylish elegance. The dishy Italian chef Vito Froio offers brand-new flavors in an all-new menu with refreshing salads, hearty soups, grilled items, authentic Italian pastas and pizzas, and gleefully sinful desserts. Get a sense of the exceptional at the new La Gondola, which opens daily for lunch from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and for dinner from 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. An afternoon menu is offered from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., which offers selected soups, salads, pizzas, pastas and desserts. Reservations are recommended and can be made by calling (32)232-6888 local 8611. La Gondola is located at the Gourmet Walk of Waterfront Cebu City Hotel & Casino, Salinas Drive, Lahug, Cebu City.

An exclusive privilege for The Legend Villas family member

THE LEGEND VILLAS FAMILY CLUB CARD IS ALREADY AVAILABLE OFFERING great privileges for its members. The family club members gets certificates of two complimentary Superior Room accommodation with breakfast for two, two upgrade vouchers of the Bi-Level Villa Suite Deluxe, room upgrade vouchers upon availing of any room, six complimentary swimming pool coupons good for two persons, 30 percent discount on total food and beverage bills whether dining alone or with guests at the Lola Maria Coffee Shop, 50 percent off on Buffet Breakfast from 9:30 a.m. to 10 a.m., 20 percent off on any banquet social functions on total food and beverage revenue. Kids below 7 years are free of charge on food and accommodations. The family club member can avail these privileges for only P6,200. The Legend Villas is located along Pioneer Street in Mandaluyong. Very near the famous shopping malls of Robinson's and SM Megamall. The hotel boasts of 125 room accommodations, 12 function rooms and 2 ballrooms. The swimming pool comes with an outdoor Jacuzzi for extra relaxation. The Lola Maria Coffee Shop located near the lobby serves sumptuous and tasty Filipino dishes. To avail of the membership, call 889-0742, 889-1592 or 889-4540.

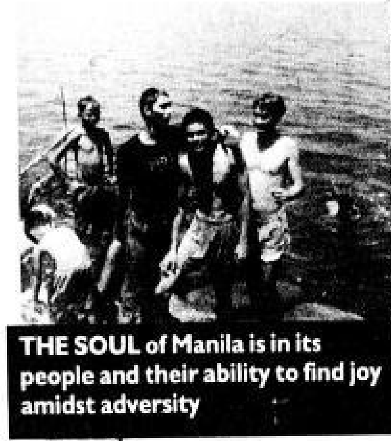
PAM Quinones shooting the nightlife scene at Saguijo

KATHY Moran and Tim Tayag at Vintage Pop

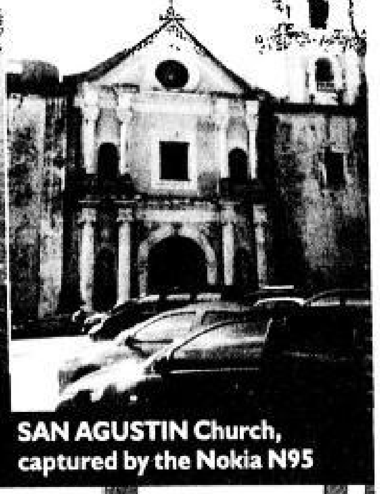
ED Capulong in Quiapo

Diary of a wireless Adventure

NOT JUST A PHONE. THE Nokia N95 acts more like a computer than a phone



THE SOUL of Manila is in its people and their ability to find joy amidst adversity



SAN AGUSTIN Church, captured by the Nokia N95

HI-TECH Embarrassment. Amina and the author at Hit Productions

From page E1

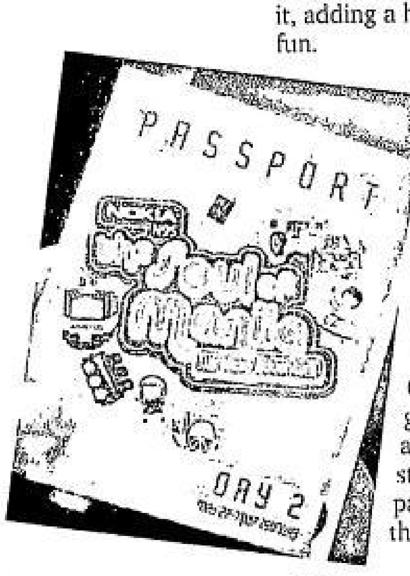
used their haggling skills and paid the lowest amount for all the items.

From Salcedo Market we headed to Café Bola in Greenbelt for a cooking lesson with Margarita Fores. We had to capture the lesson on video and transcribe the recipe in the Notes feature of the Nokia N95. Bonus points were given to teams who took a picture of the Muscovado sugar at the other Café Bola branch in Araneta Center Cubao.

Our next stop was Vintage Pop in Cubao X. We were sent Vintage Pop's catalogue in PDF format and were asked to find specific items so we could use them to create an artwork. Amina, inspired by the idea of putting together the old and the new, created a sculpture using vintage phones and metal robots. We took a photo of our creation, printed it using the printer in the store and presented it to interior designer Miguel Rosales, who was the judge for that leg.

Special tasks

At four p.m., we were all asked to listen to RX 93.1 using the phone's built in FM radio. Hotdog's song "Manila" was played. We had to use Nokia N95's voice recorder to create a file of one of us singing the last five lines of the song. I did it, adding a harmonica riff as an intro for extra fun.



Amina and I failed to do one of the tasks on day one—we weren't able to take a video of the singer in Sencillo Bar because only the first seven teams were allowed to do it and we were team number eight.

Instead, we drove around the city working on the special tasks—taking photos of the ABS-CBN signage, the facade of SM City and Araneta Coliseum. We got stuck in traffic in front of SM and Amina got out of the car and stood in the rain, ready to play the part of the traffic police and direct the flow of traffic.

We had one last task that day—to shoot videos of Saguijo and M Café and to use the video editor to make a short movie about Makati nightlife. We then had to present our video to director Lino Cayetano at one of the hotel rooms in Shangri-La by hooking up the phone to the TV.

We finished around midnight but the night wasn't over for me. I had to sneak out of the hotel to make it to my band's gig in Quezon City. Somehow, I still managed to jump around the stage. It was almost 3 a.m. when I got back to my room.

Sure, the tasks weren't really physical—and it wasn't really about speed. But it was tiring too. Day one had been a day of fun, craziness, tasks, stress, being stuck in traffic and of constantly being followed around by cameras. And we still had day two to look forward to.

Day two

Still feeling a little bad about the task that we missed, Amina and I planned our strategy over breakfast. We were determined to finish every single task no matter what it took.

First, we had to climb the Manila Clock Tower. It was not an easy feat and not just because of the height—the stairs were steep and rickety and there was broken glass all over the floor. I know they said we didn't have to wear sneakers but it was really dumb of me to wear flip flops that day. But still, the panoramic shots of Manila that we managed to take using the Nokia N95's 5 megapixel camera were worth it. Once again, we edited and printed the photo and presented it to the marshal.

The highlight of the race for me was the recording session with Rico Blanco at Hit Productions in Mile Long. And I mean this in both good and embarrassing ways. I had to record an OPM song while Amina documented the whole thing on video using the N95. I was not worried about the singing—I do that regularly with my band. My big concern was the music video. We were told that the highest points will be given to the team with the "most soulful" rendition and so we picked the fun and flirty "O Lumapit Ka." And that's how Amina decided that I should spend the next minutes trying to transform from crazy klutzy Pam to sultry flirty Pam. She worked on my sweaty, bare-faced, ponytailed self, handing me the huge hoop earrings she was wearing the previous day and her lip gloss. Then she made me put my hair down. Recording the song was quick, shooting the video wasn't. The craziness started when Amina spotted the piano behind me. She asked me to sit on it, lie on top of it and move my body against it while singing. At one point I think she even asked me to "caress it." The craziest part was there were two camera men in the studio, capturing every embarrassing second.

JAY Server records his OPM song at Hit Productions

PAOLO Manzano and his Nokia N95

DESIGN DESTINY. Miguel Rosales

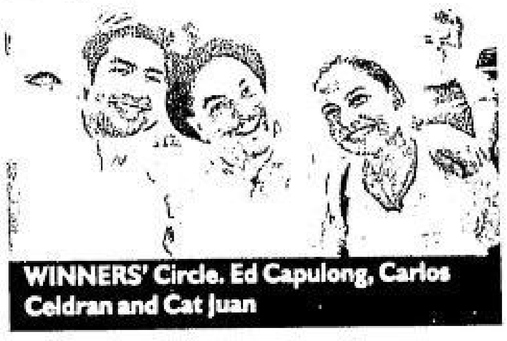
DIRECTOR's CUT. Lino Cayetano

HI-TECH TOUR. Rovilson Fernandez and Carlos Suerte Felipe at Fort Santiago

A COOKING lesson with Gaita Fores

STEPHEN Ang, Patty Laurel, Glenn Flores and Pam Quinones at Salcedo Market

CAT Juan at Fort Santiago.



WINNERS' Circle. Ed Capulong, Carlos Celdran and Cat Juan

Hi-tech embarrassment

It's always been my dream to sing while lying on top of a piano—but not like that. Not without a slinky dress. Not while wearing jeans and a bright yellow shirt. Not without a hot pianist. Not with a room full of very amused people.

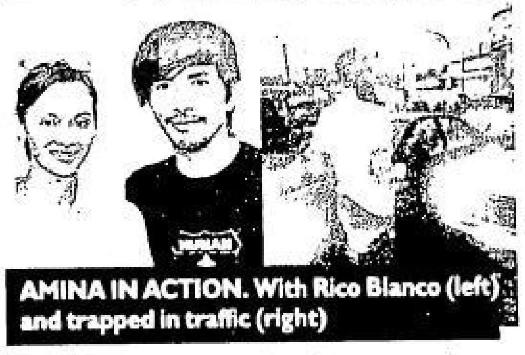
I call it hi-tech embarrassment.

We spent the rest of the day in old Manila. In Quiapo, we took photos of Quiapo Church, an Eye of Rome *anting-anting* and *bakya* and toy jeepneys along Quezon Boulevard. We used the photos and the song "Limang-Dipang Tao" to make a slideshow that we had to present to everyone's favorite tour guide Carlos Celdran. Then we had to make a high tech tour of Fort Santiago in Intramuros. It was Amina's turn to be in front of the camera and she did really well. We also took pictures of Greenbelt 4, San Agustin Church and the walls of Intramuros.

We also ticked off one photo after another on a list of ten bonus shots we could take for additional points—including photos of the statue of Dr. Jose Rizal, ballons in Luneta, laughing children, traffic on a Sunday and what we think represents the soul of Manila.

I felt relief at the end of day two. The tension and the tasks were finally over but the truth was I felt a little sad too. It had been a blast exploring my beloved city with my partner and with the Nokia N95. I have nothing but praises for Amina. She kicked ass and amazed me by wearing wedges the entire time. She was strong and determined and constantly poised and ladylike—something I don't think I'll ever be.

I've been raving about the phone too—you know it's user-friendly when it's thrust in your hands just an hour before the race and you can manage to navigate it and use to perform complex tasks. There is no bigger test for a phone than those two crazy days and I believe it passed with hi-tech colors.



AMINA IN ACTION. With Rico Blanco (left) and trapped in traffic (right)

The awarding

The race's final stop was actually at the Ayala Museum, at a party where the winners were declared. My friends groaned loudly when my team's elimination was announced but I didn't feel bad—I had too much fun to feel bitter about losing. Besides, Cat and Ed totally deserved to win P50,000 each and the trip to Amanpulo. They were amazing. I don't know how they managed to win the early bird points for almost all the tasks—I call it magic.

The two days are over, the party is too, Studio 23 has even aired the two-part special but the race still haunts me to this day. Actually, the song still haunts me to this day.

I don't know what possessed me to upload the mp3 of my recording of "O Lumapit Ka" to Multiply—and I really wasn't prepared for the reaction it got from people. I still hear the song a lot—and not just in my head—because my mom and some friends have decided to make it their ring tone. Now, people request it during my band's gigs—and yes, I've relented once.

But more than just an mp3 that wouldn't go away, the race has left a lasting impression on me.

Nokia's N95 Wireless Adventure was not just meant to showcase the features of a fantastic new phone, they wanted to inspire people to fall in love with their city once again.

And that's exactly what I did.

I may not have bagged the grand prize but my prize is this city, that embraces me and my transformations, that constantly throws surprises my way, that lets me and my friends treat it like a playground, that loves me despite my piano-lying sessions and public bra adjustments.

PALATE PLEASER. Gaita Fores and Roylison Fernandez

CAT Juan and Patty Laurel

With the incessant assault of new media, we should love the future, but be painstakingly cautious

Shoot-and score?

TECHNOLOGY is changing journalism as we know it

By James Gabrillo

IT WAS JULY OF 2005. I received a text message from a friend about the bombings in London. I immediately ran to the living room to turn on the tube to BBC. And there it was, right before my eyes-Do-It-Yourself journalism in the limelight.

Clearly, BBC did not follow their usual game plan—they weren't showing reporters on the scene of the incident. Instead, the network was broadcasting the photos and video clips shot by ordinary citizens. It was burning, breaking news, period. And it was curiously exhilarating to watch.

Within the next few days, BBC and other major news networks received over a thousand still and moving images sent by average Brits. Newspapers joined the bandwagon and put photos taken by mobile phones on the front pages. The images were grainy, but who cared?

Most online news websites were one in claiming that the London bombings paved the way for media's "democratization." The power of media to influence thinking is now shared to ordinary people. Are you jubilant/scared yet?

In local TV, primetime news show TV Patrol has a segment called "Citizen Patrol," where ordinary people report on things immediately concerning them (i.e., water system in the neighborhood, frustrating barangay officials).

Perils of the paparazzi cult-ure

These are all good developments. But you see, before embracing new applications of new technology, we should be honest enough to anticipate probable glitches that the tool or system may cause in our lives. Keep in mind the Pinoys' *usisero* culture and just imagine the riot—common folks racing to get to the site of the tragedy to take photos.

This is a knotty case. People are running towards danger to be in the know (and to acquire cash in exchange for a wonderful photo). We hear of reporters getting wounded or dying for the sake of covering a news item. It won't be long 'til this happens to the citizen paparazzi. Is it worth it?

At the same time, D-I-Y journalism spells the death of the traditional method of news operations, as if our generation is not doing enough to toss newspapers down the junk bin. What's going to happen to professional journalism? Do we seriously want to do this to ourselves?

Surf the net and you'll see more alarming implications—advertisers are focusing their buzz on popular personal blogs and other D-I-Y news sites, which aren't exactly devoid of futile information.

Not run-of-the-mill

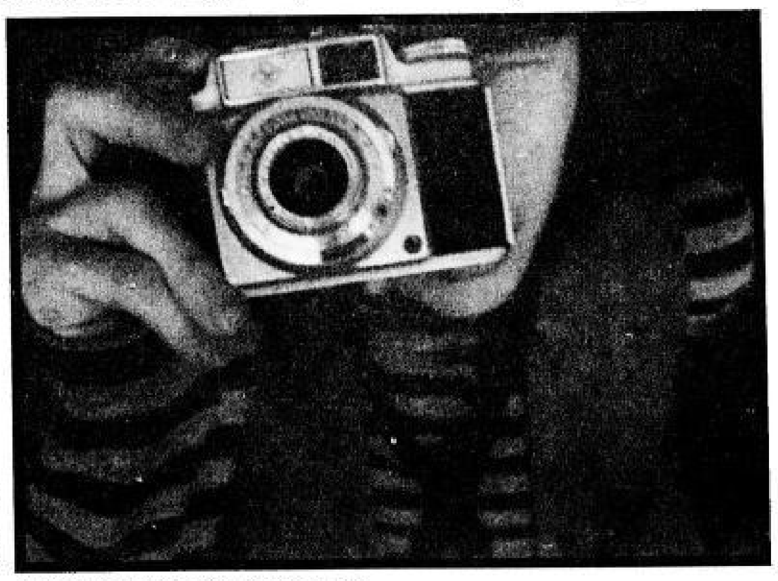
The conditions in which pros practice journalism have changed radically as the world-culture continually expands. Photojournalists are covering bloody wars fought daily while the paparazzi are busy taking photos of a bad modern icon that just came out of jail.

And yet, the tenets of the trade remain the same—your story should be accurate, precise, objective, and significant to the rest of the human race.

Our access to information is extremely broad, and we know this. But so far, we've failed to take full advantage of the benefits. Instead of fostering truth in creative communities, we resort to using new media in order to fashion bad politics, focus on the latest celebrity gossip, and create more divisions in ideologies.

Citizen journalism should be bridging various social disconnects and not just breaking random senseless ground. In the end, it's really about taking the juicy lemons and making tasty lemonade.

Seeing disparate values fuse for the good—that's an image that would be fly to take a photo of.

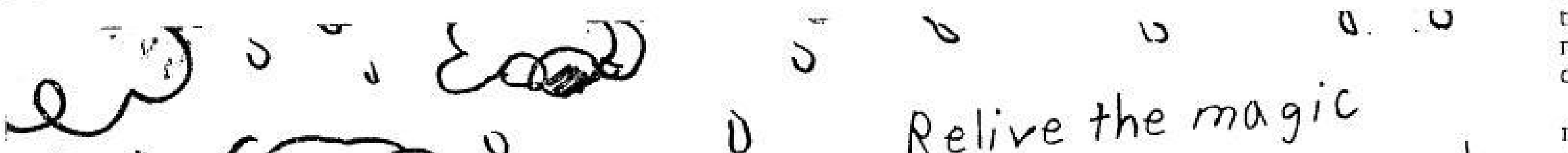


ARMED and possibly dangerous

JOURNALIST

EVERYONE'S a journalist

PAPARAZZI patrol



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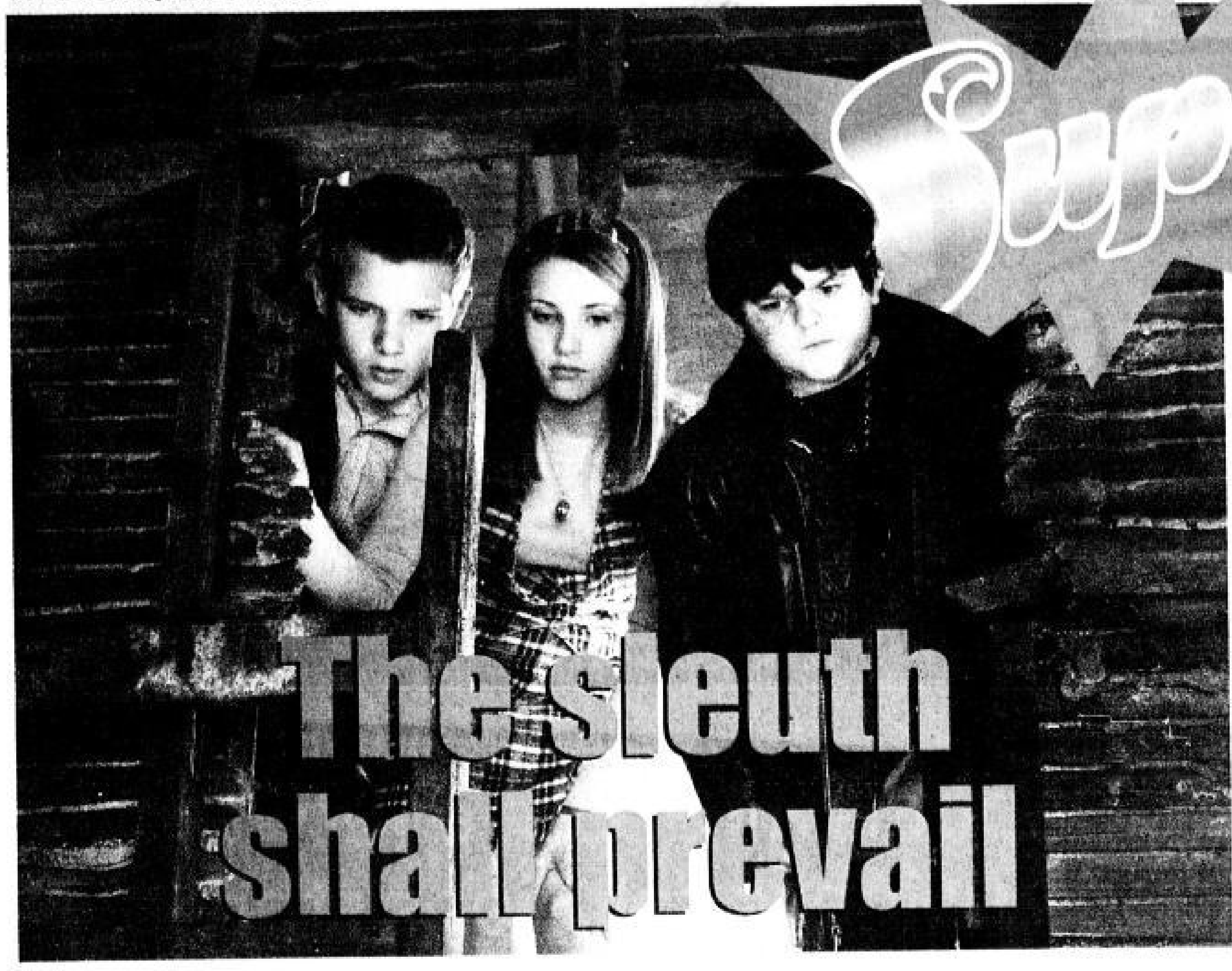
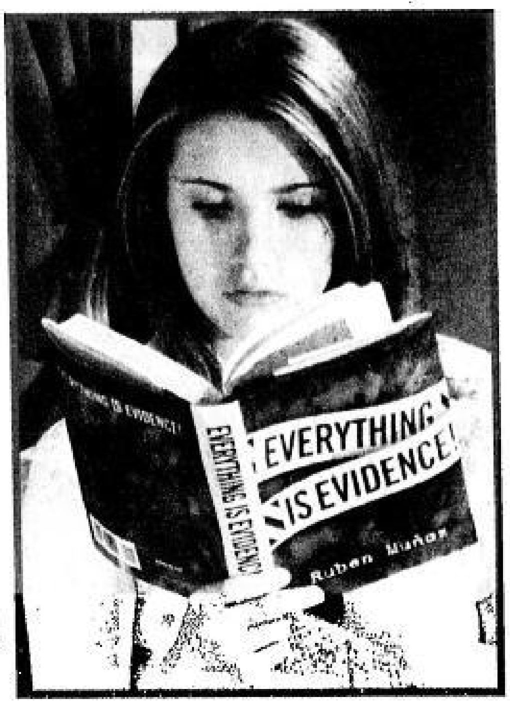


The sleuth shall prevail

Nancy Drew is reborn in clueless Hollywood? Now there's a real mystery



OUT THE WINDOW

Tals Diaz

LONG BEFORE VERONICA Mars made a living out of getting a clue on television—70 years ago to be exact—there already lived a precocious teenage detective in the parallel universe of fiction. Her name was Nancy Drew. She was the smart', titian-haired sleuth who drove a convertible, preferred pencil cut skirts and solved the most complex mysteries accessorized with a flashlight and kitten heels. She had two BFFs, a frou frou girl named Bess, and tomboy named George.

Together, the feisty triumvirate snooped everywhere and fought crime in their suburban 'hood of River Heights. In spite of her busy schedule, Nancy still had time to date older guys—she was seeing the super preppie Ned Nickerson from Emerson College.

Sigh. Back then, Nancy Drew was the epitome of all things cool in my pre-pubescent imagination. (Yep, even with 'em pencil cut skirts that I found a tad bit too long, even as a kid.) More importantly, it is her whom I am absolutely grateful to for my slavish devotion to books, for it was the vintage mystery series written by the equally mysterious "Carolyn Keene" that I had flagrantly devoured.

On weekends, bookstores were my own Disneyland, for there my eyes would feast at the vast collection of the classic yellow bordered books published by Grosset and Dunlap. I remember I would go total apeshit if I didn't know what the "Mystery at Lilac Inn" was all about, so I'd barter with my folks with promises of good behavior for titles I hadn't read yet.

Hollywood High

Hyper-fast forward to the 00s, and that ol' familiar idol of my childhood is back, this time reincarnated in Hollywood, with Emma Roberts cast in the starring role. I'm all grown up, and Nancy Drew has stayed the same age, natch.

Instead of a period piece, the script depicts a Nancy, who has time traveled to the present age. She apparently listens to her iPod, surfs the Net and has moved out of River Heights to the Holly 'hood. Hmmm. How will a smart, resourceful and non-scantily clad young girl fare in a pop culture era that is obsessed with Paris Hilton's feeding schedule in the slammer? Will this good girl even be marketable to a whole new generation of impressionable young teen girls?

For it's no mystery that there's not much fascination for goody-two shoes, square girls with their shirts tightly buttoned up to their collarbones. Transporting the likes of Nancy to today would be practically chumming the water for the predatorial female clique. In the movie trailer, Nancy is in fact taunted by her new school's version of the Mean Girls for her old-fashioned ways—I mean, she's still wearing penny loafers for frick's sake!

Yet she's reportedly not succumbing to peer pressure. In the latest Newsweek issue, producer Jerry Weintraub says "Nancy's not gonna drink half a bottle of vodka, smoke a joint and crash her father's car into a pole."

THE SLEUTH/ F4

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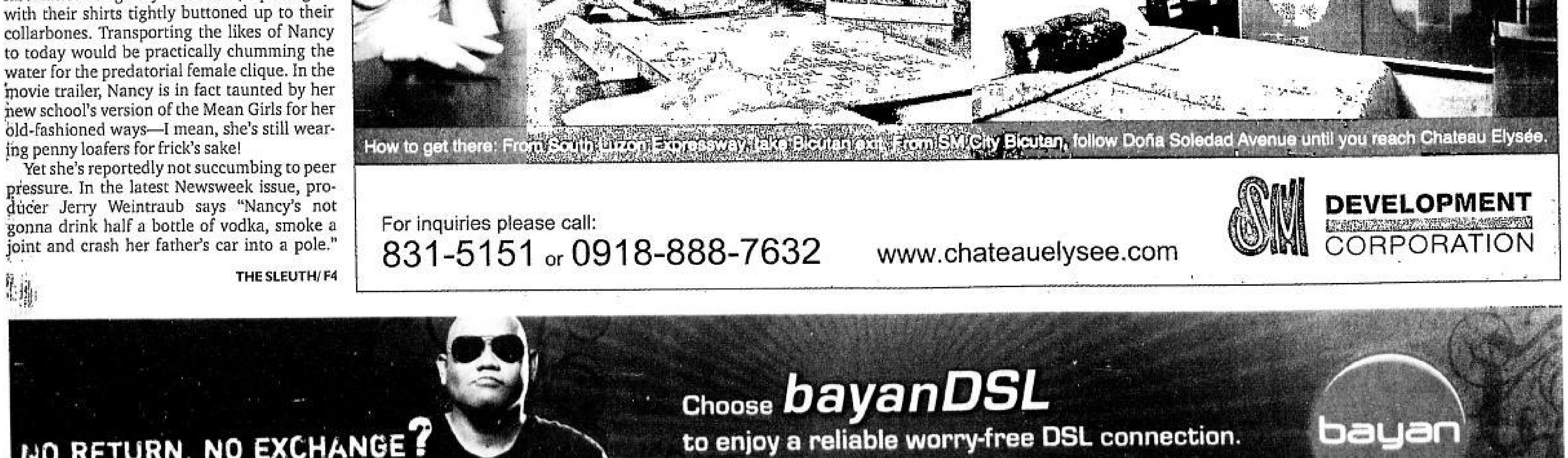
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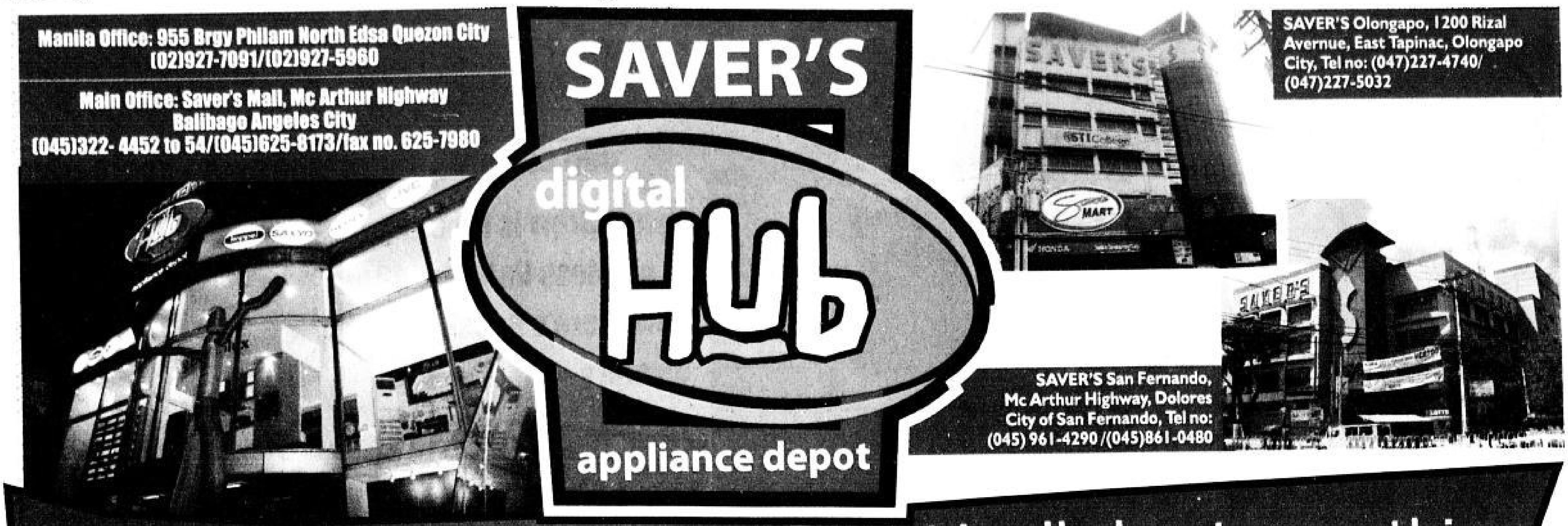
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SAVER'S IS THE TRUSTED NAME IN appliance retailing and wholesaling in Central and Northern Luzon. For over 22 years, it is proud to be the number 1 choice of every household. Aside from selling branded appliances known for its quality and value, Saver's is now your total home and business solution store, who can provide all the needs of every home and businesses - offices, hotels, restaurants and the like.

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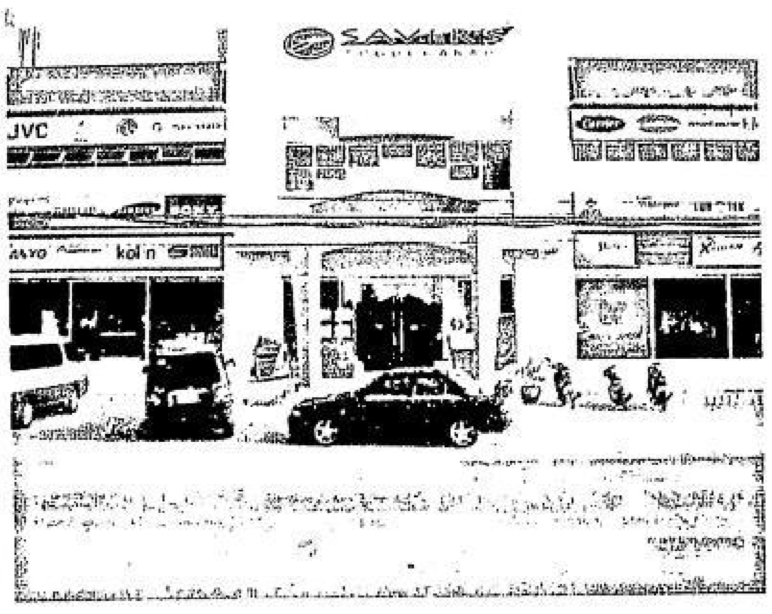
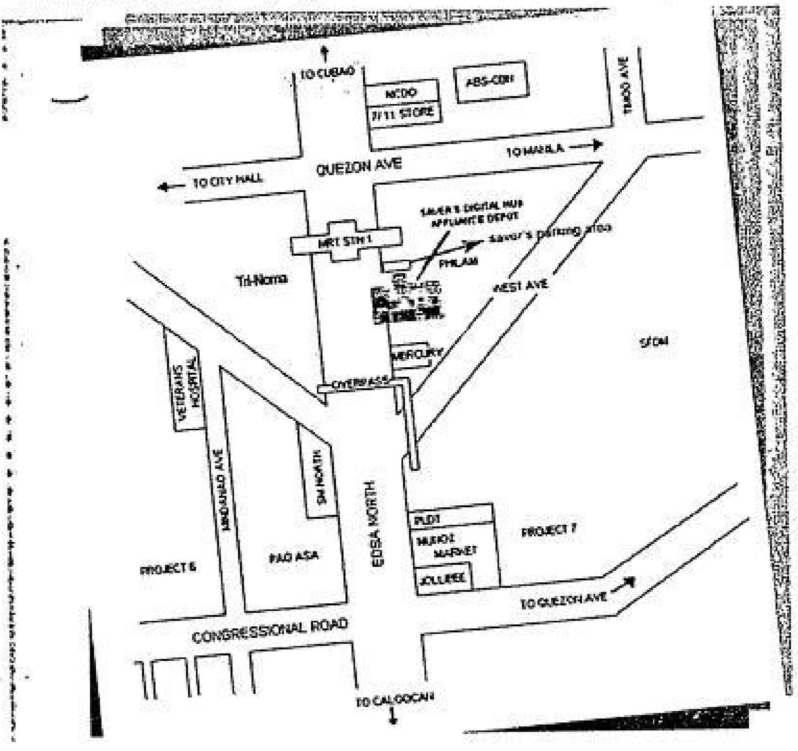
SAVER'S/ F3

SAVERS DIGITAL HUB APPLIANCE DEPOT TUGUEGARAO OPENS
Saver's Group of Companies president Jaime 'Jack' Uy and Dr. Joseph Bunagan, general manager of Saver's Tuguegarao cut the ribbon during the opening.



SAVER'S DIGITAL HUB APPLIANCE DEPOT
17th branch which opened June 14, at Ugac Sur, Ugac Highway, Tuguegarao City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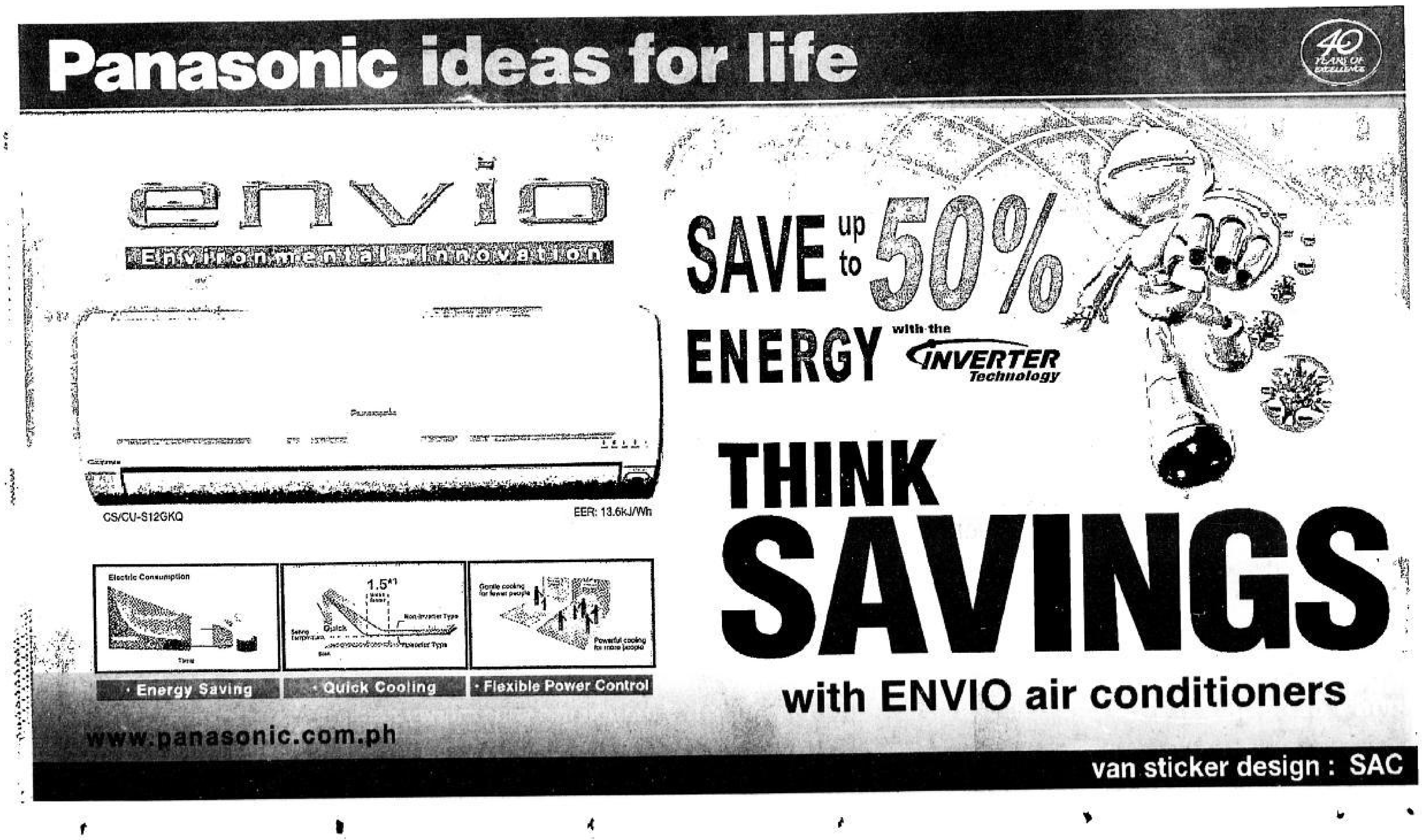
PANASONIC, SAVER'S DIGITAL HUB APPLIANCE DEPOT PRODUCT ORIENTATION
The Panasonic sales and marketing group with Saver's Digital Hub Appliance Depot management and managers strike a pose after the product orientation last June 26. In photo: Panasonic group headed by Luzon regional manager - James Manalo, Central Luzon branch manager - Ronald G. Carreon, customer service manager - Henry Malantic, department manager cooling and system sales - Rey Ocampo, marketing manager for cooling - Ardon Dadulo, PABX specialist - Bonifacio Bautista, section manager office automation - Bong Raz, section specialist - Joey Ramos, section specialist - Allan Nolasco; Saver's group – headed by president/CEO – Jaime 'Jack' Uy , technical assistant to the president - engineer Joven Ramoneda, corporate marketing manager - Rhea Anicoche-Tan, managers Allen Basco, Jenet Layson, Richard Uy, Nancy Lo, Benzon Bamba, Leonardo David, Boyet de Guzman, engineer Joji Espiritu, and engineer Divino Alapag. Also in photo are the supervisors.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From page F2

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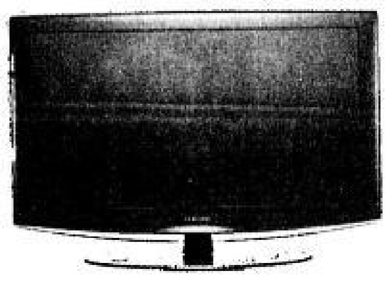

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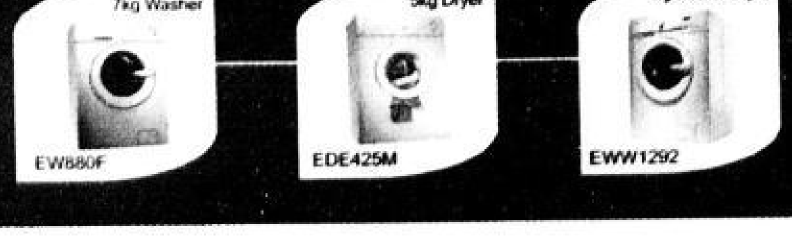

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The sleuth shall prevail

From page F1

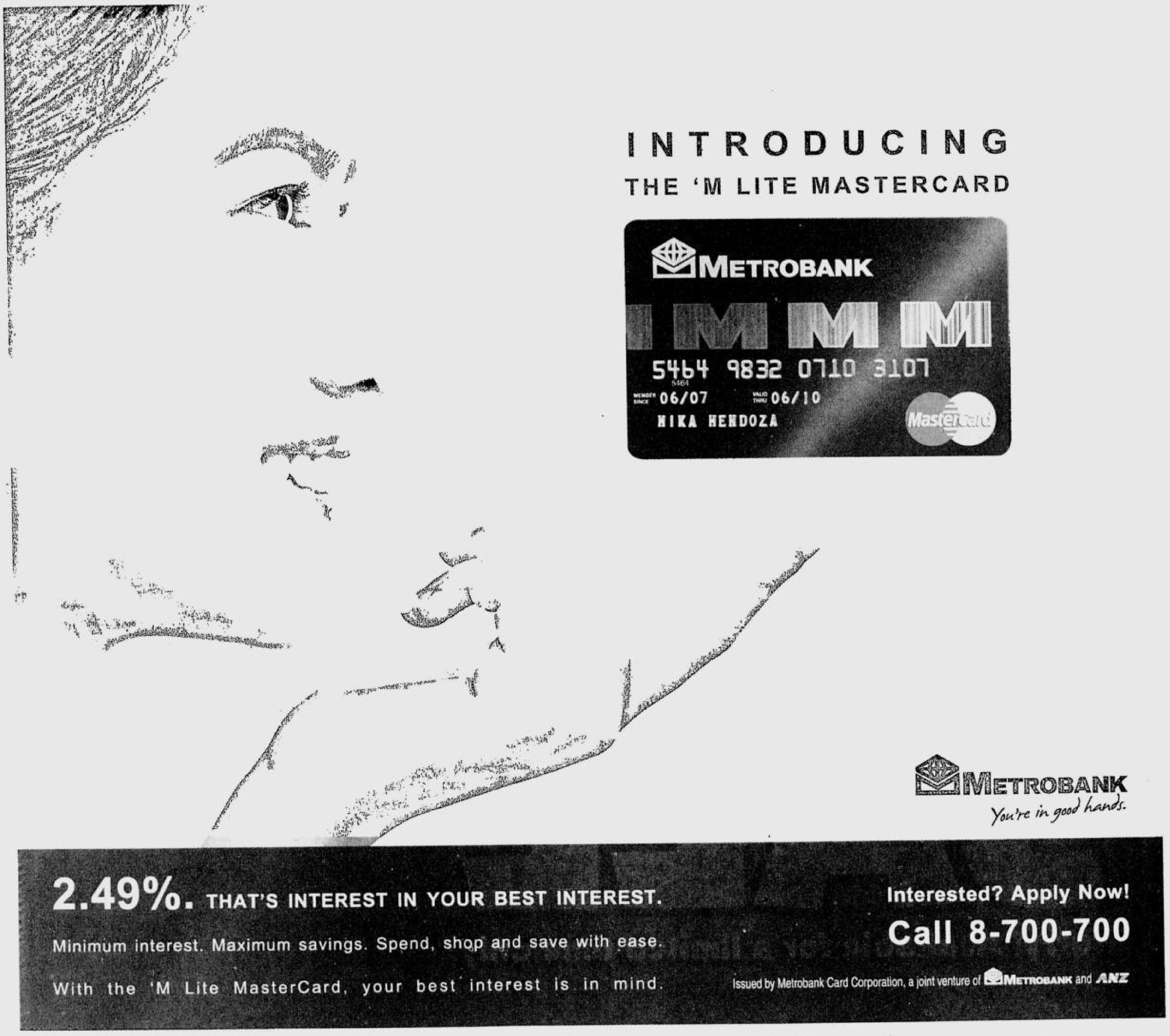
(Else that would just be a docu of a night in the life of Lindsay/ Britney/ Nicole.) They're keeping her good and whistle-clean. Which thereby makes me doubtful if she'll score high on the hip-o-meter of today's generation born in the wild, wired world.

Get a clue

The good news about this Hollywood rebirth is that, just like many books that have been blessed with a second wind with news of its adaptation for the big screen, my beloved collection is back in the New York Times' bestseller list. Who knew? A sleuth with substance could actually share the spotlight among skanks abusing substance.

So I'll be trooping to the theaters v soon, along with an NFF whom I'd recently discovered to have shared the same childhood adulation, and root for my ol' heroine in what promises to be an unabashed senti-fest. Whether I'd like the movie or not, half the fun has been walking through the old neighborhoods and opening secret drawers of my highly imaginative childhood. Once again, the sleuth has set me free.

NANCY DREW
THE SECRET OF THE OLD CLOCK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RIVERA. A tall order for the *Pinay* face of "Marimar."

Promising comers energize new TV-film projects

By Nestor U. Torre

MOST PRODUCERS BANK ON established stars to get viewers to watch their new TV and film projects. Thus, you see big stars like Dolphy, Judy Ann Santos, Susan Roces, Robin Padilla, Angel Locsin and Richard Gutierrez topbilling TV shows, and Sharon Cuneta, Aga Muhlach, Regine Velasquez, Bong Revilla and Kris Aquino adding stellar cachet and clout to new movie projects.

Assurance

Hiring stars costs a lot of money, but gives producers some assurance that the viewing public will at least be curious about their new productions.

On the other hand, projects starring new discoveries have to spend millions to build them up as exciting talents who merit viewers' support and patronage.

So, when new talents get their break in big-budget productions,

PROMISING/ G2

FELEO. Topbills the Cinemalaya entry, "Endo."

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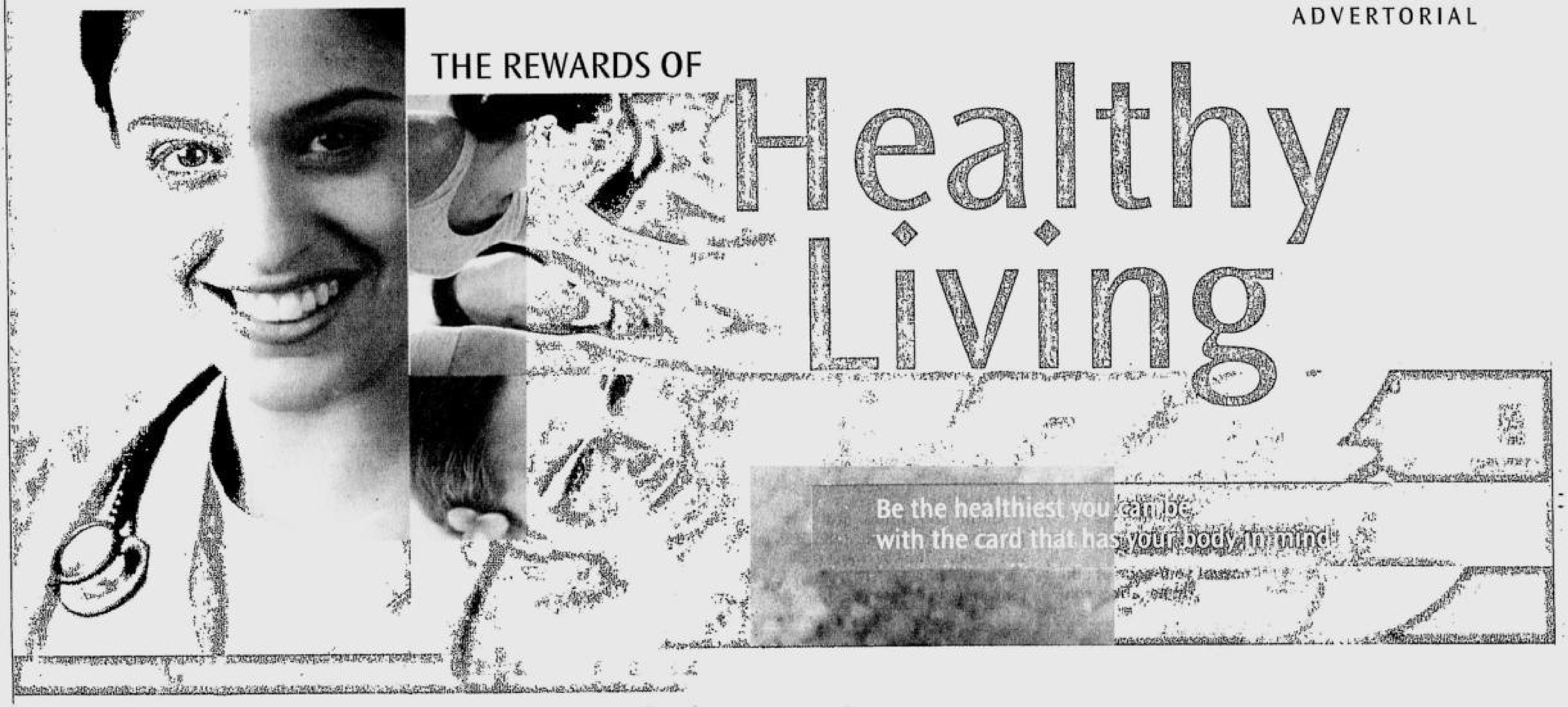
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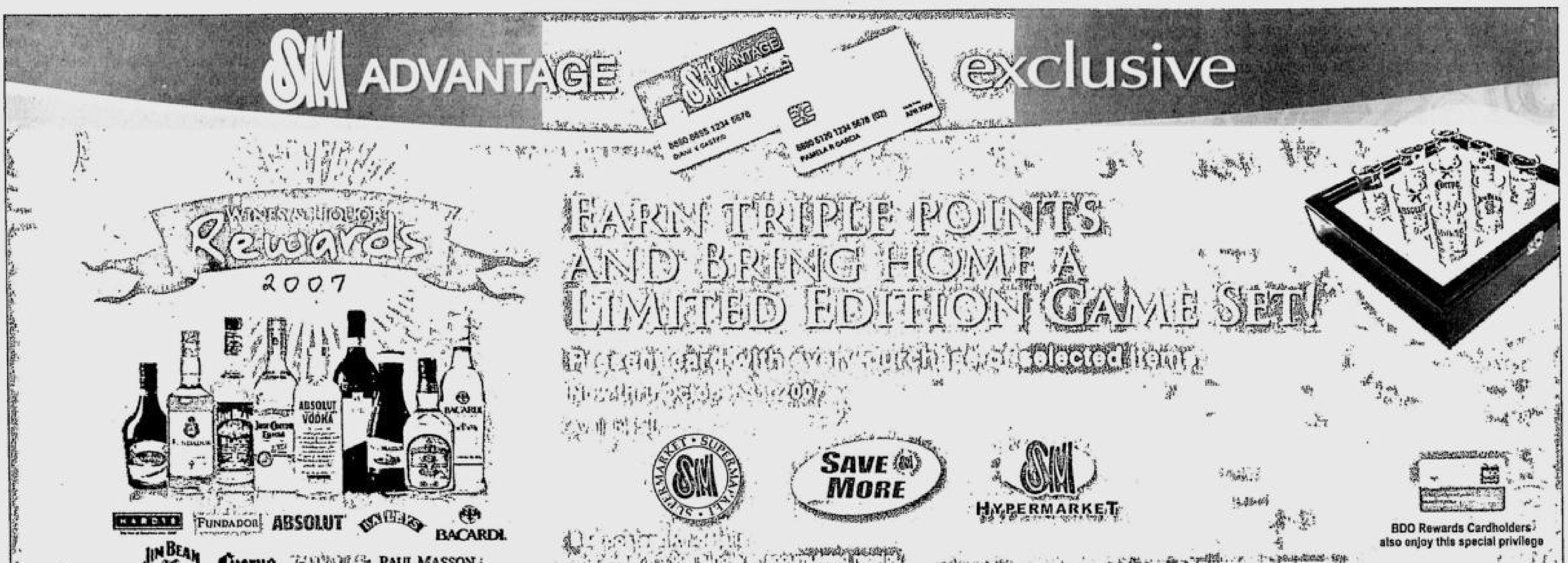
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Check this section every other Saturday for the latest SM Advantage promos and highlights.

Maria, Julius and Tintin reveal the truth behind the rumors

BABAOS. Major changes in the works.

By Rito P. Asilo

THERE WAS A LOT OF LAUGHter, work-related anecdotes, and some unexpected revelations when we met Julius Babao, Tintin Bersola-Babao and Maria Ressa, who now heads ABC-CBN's News and Current Affairs division, in a joint interview at the network's sprawling compound. The atmosphere was warm and friendly, despite the sensitive nature of the subject matter that we were about to discuss.

Maria was kind enough to suggest the joint Q&A with the popular and well-loved celebrity couple, who recently found themselves the center of gossip and speculation following an announcement that they were not going to be part of "Umagang Kay Ganda," Channel 2's replacement to the now defunct morning show, "Magandang Umaga, Pilipinas."

Articulate

We knew that Maria, the former CNN journalist, was going to be intelligent and articulate, but we didn't expect her to be disarmingly charming, as well. In a round-table discussion, we told the trio that we wanted to clarify the rumors that had been circulating.

Ressa began, "This is the first time that we're talking about this, and I'm glad that we're doing this together." We appreciated the noted journalist's transparency and fairness. She answered our questions, even the ultrasensitive ones, as long as they didn't reveal internal matters that would potentially affect the network's operations.

On the other hand, Tintin, while bound by the network's confidentiality clause, wanted to correct the mistaken perception that she was fired because of her numerous commercial endorsements. Here are excerpts of our interview:

Can we talk about Julius and Tintin?

RESSA. Was with CNN for 15 years before she came home to head ABS-CBN's News and Current Affairs division.

M: Sure.

Julius and Tintin: We're right here.

So, were they suspended?

M: I'll go as far as saying there were immediate issues we had to address. I hope you also understand that part of the reason I make a distinction between what is private—what is internal to the company, and what is public—is because any company should have its standards of ethics. You need to implement them. For example, when a person is late, and you punish him for his tardiness, it doesn't mean that the person isn't good at doing his job, or that he did something wrong.

If I was reporting for CNN, and I cut my hair without telling my manager, that's considered an offense. But, that depends on the rules of the journalist's company, because my contract with CNN stated that I couldn't change my appearance without approval from my manager. We had issues that had to deal with our standards of ethics manual, so as a consequence of that, you didn't see Julius and Tintin at the end of "MUP." That's the most that I can say.

Is part of your code of ethics confirming or negating something that's been done?

M: You know what? It has something to do with our public work. For example, if Julius does a story, and it has an impact on the public, everything we do will be transparent. For example, when PGMA accused Julius of harboring a terrorist, Julius took a voluntary leave. We spent two weeks investigating, and as soon as we came out with the investigation, *nilatag namin lahat.* We published it in the papers, because he is our "TV Patrol" anchor, and the public has a right to know what happened. But, if it is something that is private to them…

Private

You mean, if it's private to the company…?

M: …Or to them… What you do as a journalist or a news anchor is something we need to be open about and accountable to the public. If its something about Antonia (the couple's daughter), it depends if people want to talk about it or not. Some people are comfortable being open, others want to be more private.

Are you in the process of reshuffling your programming slate? What are your plans for Julius and Tintin?

M: Big plans! I can tell you we're working on a show with Tintin. Julius is our "TV Patrol" anchor, which means he's a mainstay—he's our primetime male anchor. And they both have a radio show.

J: On dzMM.

M: We're keeping Julius very busy. I'll tell you that there are changes in the works. I've talked to Tintin about working on something together.

Tintin and Julius are very popular—and people talk. It's not about Tintin's commercial endorsements, is it? I heard that some people are exempted from that prohibition.

T: I'm exempted.

(We were given a copy of the Code of Ethics. When we checked out Sec. 10, Art.3, it states that "the prohibition on on-air and/or on-camera talents or employees does not apply to talents and employees who don't deliver "hard news." It does not apply to those who exclusively deliver soft or light news, like trivia, entertainment or "star" news.)

So, Julius can't endorse…?

M: There are only a few who can, and part of the reason is because you don't want to have a commercial or a company dictate the editorial content.

How do you feel about the change?

J: I expected that I would be taken out of "MUP" months before. Maria talked to me about it because they had plans for me as a journalist. They wanted me to focus on serious issues. Veer away from light stuff.

Most signature anchors, even in the States, don't do both. If you're newscasting in the evening, you can't do a morning show. *Buti nga sa atin, may ganun.* I see it as a career move. And I still have my current affairs show ("XXX").

Can you see yourselves working separately?

J: Yes, why not?

T: We've done it in the past. I did a show ("Etcetera") with Boy Abunda without Julius.

Actually, *kulang ang question ko:* Do you see yourselves working separately in different stations? *(Laughter)*

T: Maria and I spoke about this already, and she knows what I'm going to say. The universe now is vast, and it's wide open. If there are options, I'm going to think of my options. And if it will take me to a different direction, and if it makes me a better person, yes.

But are Tintin and Julius exclusive to ABS-CBN?

M: In the past, they were. But, in this instance, I don't want Tintin leaving us. Let me put it this way: She has valuable experience. The network would really want to keep her. I will do all I can to keep her. I have an offer that's with her now. If she gets another offer, there's nothing that would keep her from taking that offer. Except for me to come back with a better counteroffer.

"TV Patrol" started airing in March 1987. You took over from Angelique Lazo.

T: *Naaalala mo pa?* That was in 1993, yes. I am homegrown. It's been 14 years.

***Kaya ko tinanong kasi* you don't have a TV show now. But, if you have a better option outside, it will be harder for you to let go…**

T: Given my nature, I am sentimental, and I get very attached to things. It will be difficult for me, but sometimes you've got to take risks.

M: I'll add to the history. The public has seen these two grow up… from being young rebels who took over, and then, they established themselves in it. Now, they're in this wonderful period that can be scary. It can also be very exciting—which is what the next step is about.

Were all trying to find the right thing to do. In Julius' case, it's clear that he's grown up. *(Laughs)* I don't have all the answers right now. So, it's difficult. I don't want to hold anyone back. And I don't think Tintin would want that either.

Transition

So, you see this as a mere transition?

M: I love things like this, and I know that it can be really scary. When I left CNN, who knew what I was walking into? I was with CNN for 15 years. I took a huge step. I feel like this is what I've spent my entire career getting ready to do. I wanted something more.

Are you getting that "more" here?

M: Oh my God, more than I bargained for!

T: I'll take it from Maria—*ang ganda kasi ng sinabi nya.* I have to admit that I'm scared, because I don't know what's waiting for me out there. But, I just have to trust in what I have accomplished for the past 14 years. I still have my credibility…

M: Yes, you just have to trust. The program that we're offering capitalizes on her strengths. Its something she knows. I've seen the best of what she does. And this program taps that—but it allows more room to grow. I also want to know what Tintin will do next. The way Tintin grows will help shape the News and Current Affairs division.

MONTAGE

'Genie in the House' premieres July 6

ON NICKELODEON NEXT MONTH, "GENIE in the House" premieres on July 6 and telecasts Friday to Sunday. The new show is about 14-year-old Emma and Sophie, who find an old lamp that's home to a 1,000-year-old genie, Adil, from Balaamkaadar.

And, starting July 2, Nick Jr. can be viewed twice a day (7-10 a.m. and 12-3 p.m. daily). It'll be a double treat of fun shows like "Go, Diego, Go!" and "Blue's Room." Also on July 2, at 8:30 p.m., the new season of "Naturally Sadie" unreels.

Other viewing treats: Monday, "Danny Phantom." Tuesday, "The Adventures of Jimmy Neutron." Wednesday, "The Fairly OddParents." Thursday, "SpongeBob SquarePants." Friday, "Kappa Mikey."

"BLUE'S ROOM." Will be featured twice daily on Nick Jr.

Kuh Ledesma

Kuh Ledesma updates the *kundiman* in "K," her latest album. Working creatively and sensitively with Bob Aves, Kuh makes the songs sound fresh without disrespecting the genre. Cuts include "Pakiusap," "Nasaan Ka, Irog," "Ugoy ng Duyan," "Dahil Sa 'Yo," "Silayan," "Bulaklak," and "Bayan Ko."

LEDESMA. Updates the *kundiman* without disrespecting the genre.

Ridin' Low car show

Last April 27-29, Metrowalk in Ortigas was transformed into a hotspot for the best custom cars as Sun Cellular Xpressload 100 Top 10 and Sun i-Messenger sponsored the first Ridin' Low celebrity car show. The one-of-a-kind event showcased a wide variety of cars and SUVs, and entertainment was provided by Jay-R, Sandwich, Keith Martin and Chris Lawrence.

Movies on TV

On HBO today at 11:10 p.m., "A Civil Action." Tomorrow at 3:45 p.m., "Babe: Pig in the City." July 2 at 9 p.m., "Meet the Fockers." July 3 at 11 p.m., "Brokeback Mountain." July 4 at 11 p.m., "Born on the Fourth of July." July 5 at 9 p.m., "The Evening Star." July 6 at 11 p.m., "Syriana."

On Cinemax today at 2:55 p.m., "A Sound of Thunder." Tomorrow at 3:30 p.m., "Fire Down Below." July 2 at 11 p.m., "Dog Day Afternoon." July 3 at 2 p.m., "The Last Boy Scout." July 4 at 2 p.m., "Breakfast at Tiffany's." July 5 at 7 p.m., "To Be the Best." July 6 at 6 a.m., "Jason and the Argonauts."

Digital music artist

After a two-year hiatus, Acel is back as a solo artist with a new line of compositions, all of which are available only through digital download. Acel's collection is led by the single, "Pakiusap." To download, get an E-pin or Acel's prepaid card from Loadcentral or Netopia, log on to www.starrecords.com.ph, and use the log-in name and password provided on the E-pin or card.

On Second Avenue's 'Third Row'

July 7, "About Schmidt" with Jack Nicholson. July 14, "Man on the Moon," with Jim Carrey. July 21, "I Am Sam," with Sean Penn. July 28, "Last Life in the Universe," a Thai film directed by Pen-Ek Ratanaruang.

On C/S Channel

July 3 at 10 p.m., the sixth season of "24" unreels. July 29 at 8 p.m., Season Two of "Medium" starts telecasting. Thursday at 6:30 p.m., "The Takedown" reveals what goes on behind the scene in casinos. On Big Hit Movies: July 4, "Bloodwork," with Clint Eastwood. July 11, "John Q," with Denzel Washington. July 18, "Black Hawk Down," with Josh Hartnett. July 25, "Identity," with John Cusack.

Promising comers

…From page G1

show biz fans wonder what unique qualities they possess that have convinced their producers to bankroll their bids for stardom, despite the public's initial indifference.

Take the Filipino version of the popular Spanish telenovela, "Marimar," the title role of which has gone, not to Angel Locsin as earlier expected, but to starlet Marian Rivera. To be sure, the series' popularity is a strong come-on, but its lead actress must still be captivating enough to "carry" the new show to the top of the ratings.

For newcomers like Marian, that's a tall order, especially in this star-crazed country. —Which is why Marian is now being hyped in a big way, so that, by the time the *Pinay* "Marimar" starts telecasting, the starlet shall have effectively become a star.

On the other hand, the show biz times have changed, as seen in the many stars whose careers have gone *pffft!*, and the rise of new talents like Mark Herras and Jennylyn Mercado.

Better chance

So, local show biz is friendlier to new finds than it's ever been, giving hopefuls like Marian a better chance of making it on TV and in the movies.

To click as the *Pinay* Marimar, Marian should project a combination of innocent beauty, sweetness, and unsophisticated sassiness, which took Thalia, the star of the Spanish original, all the way to the top.

Let's hope that she does manage to make the iconic Marimar come alive, the *Pinay* way.

Also reprising a role made famous by somebody else is child star, Krystal Reyes, who's been tapped to play the plum title role in another new "revival" *teleserye*, this time, based on "Mga Mata ni Angelita," which starred the late child star, Julie Vega.

Iconic role

Like Marian, Krystal is expected to benefit greatly from her latest and biggest assignment. She will play the iconic role of a blind girl who is shunned by society, and befriends a hunchback (to be played by Marvin Agustin).

And, in the Cinemalaya film, "Endo," Ina Feleo finally gets to play the lead role that some movie industry observers say has practically been her "birthright," because her parents are thespic icons, Laurice Guillen and Johnny Delgado.

You can't beat artistic genes like those, so people thought Ina would come into her own a couple of years ago in a movie about the Virgin of Manaoag.

Alas, it turned out that her role in that religious film didn't test her thespic mettle, so her performance was less than stellar.

In "Endo," however, Ina gets to play the more challenging role of a young Filipina trapped in a series of dead-end jobs, so she should do much better—and a new star should grace our industry's glittering firmament after the 2007 Cinemalaya digital film fest opens at the CCP next month!

'Sirit' teaches basic concepts, values

By Nestor U. Torre

WE HAVE SO FEW TRULY CHILD-SENSITIVE TV shows for young viewers that we need to go out of our way to support the handful we do have. One such production is "Sirit," which is telecast every Saturday at 7:30 a.m. on Channel 2.

We caught the show last June 23 and saw that it was meant for very young viewers. Using live action and animation, it teaches kids basic concepts and values, and its lighthearted tone and appealing visuals make learning a pleasant activity.

Shapes

The telecast we watched taught children how to identify square, triangular and round shapes, which the lively female host wore as "hats" to frame her face.

She also taught values like working together by involving on-cam characters in a series of riddle-based searches. Finally, it encouraged kids to think logically and to look for answers based on some clues provided by the host.

All of these activities and goals made the show's running time pass quite briskly, and that was all to the good. On the minus side, we found the young characters' dialogue pitched too shrilly and loudly.

Our favorite part of the telecast was its visual "tribute" to the rainbow, with its colors filling the screen in different shapes, curlicues, whorls, etc.

If you have very young children, why not encourage them to watch "Sirit" some Saturday morning? Your and your kids' support would boost the show's prospects for staying on the tube, and not ending up on the heap of children's programs that are no longer being telecast on local TV.

Quixotic

A concerned supporter of locally produced child-sensitive children's programs saliently observes: "It is already quixotic for blocktimers to produce shows with neither network backup nor massive advertising support—so, it's even more selfless to produce programs for Filipino kids.

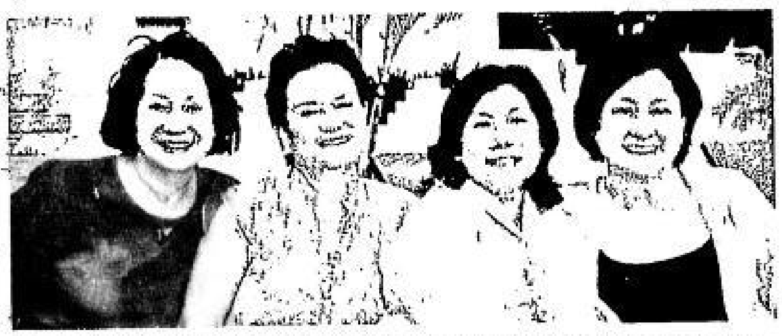
"Producers are constantly on pins and needles, because, if their ratings dip, their shows could be in trouble.

We have very few such programs to begin with. —And we boast of having a population of which nearly half is made up of under-18s (technically children, if we follow the UN definition)."

Clarion call

We trust that parents and educators will heed this clarion call, and support shows like "Sirit." Of course, we also urge advertisers to put their money to good use by boosting the financial prospects of the few *truly* child-sensitive kiddie programs we have.

All too often these days, so-called children's shows in fact encourage kids to think and behave like little adults, replacing their sense of wonder and innocence with a sassy, hip attitude and cynicism that nips the flower of genuine childhood in the bud.



THE AUTHOR (left) with Gloria Dominguez-Garcia, Myrna Medina-Magdaluyo and Linda Victa.

Friends forever

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

WE SHARED THE SAME MIND set as college-age teenagers in the same boarding house along Taft ave. We graduated from PWU. I have a degree in AB English; I attended night school because I was a working student. My friends were Gloria Dominguez-Garcia (AB Psychology), Myrna Medina-Magdaluyo (AB Interior Design), Linda Victa (BS Nursing) and Edna Bulseco-Baxter, who couldn't make it to our recent reunion after 20 long years.

Songs

Back then, we enjoyed the songs of the Beatles, Elvis Presley, and Pat Boone. We used to go out a lot with boy friends. We enjoyed one another's company—and we were patient with each other.

Gloria and Freddie Garcia's relationship was a special one. From renting a room with a common bathroom in Malate, Freddie's exceptional talent in television management bloomed soon after. The rest is history.

Gloria is a lucky wife. The secret to the couple's longevity is love. She is in a business partnership with Myrna via Health and Beyond, whose main store is at Rockwell Powerplant, with kiosks in Glorietta 4, Alabang Center, Market Market, and Robinson's malls.

Lingerie

Myrna is also a clothes manufacturer with 20 high-powered sewing machines at Elle Philippines. She specializes in lingerie. Her beautiful bank uniforms are in great demand (0917 854-8327).

For spiritual growth, she attends the Bread of Life Fellowship every Sunday at Greenbelt I. Myrna and Gloria participated in my Batanes Photo Safari last May.

Linda Victa has been based in California since 1984. She invested well. Witty, patient and compassionate, she now works as an OR nurse at Kaiser Permanente in San Diego.

She came home recently to take a break from work. Together, we had barbecue, *atis*, Davao pomelos and *lanzones*. We lunched on *kare-kare*, crispy *tilapia*, *laing*, and green mangoes.

Special ties

The group honored Linda with a show at Club Mwah, then dined at Bulan Resto in Little Baguio. Our days were full as we celebrated the special ties that have bound us for almost five decades.

We didn't want to be merely average. We're all very happy to have succeeded in our chosen fields!

* * *

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One such disease, Leptospirosis, occurs when leptospira bacteria from rat urine and feces enters our system. Typically, this happens when contaminated water comes into contact with the tiniest cuts, blisters and abrasions on our skin. It causes a wide range of symptoms which can easily be misdiagnosed. If left untreated, it can lead to kidney damage, meningitis, liver failure, and respiratory distress. In rare cases, death occurs.

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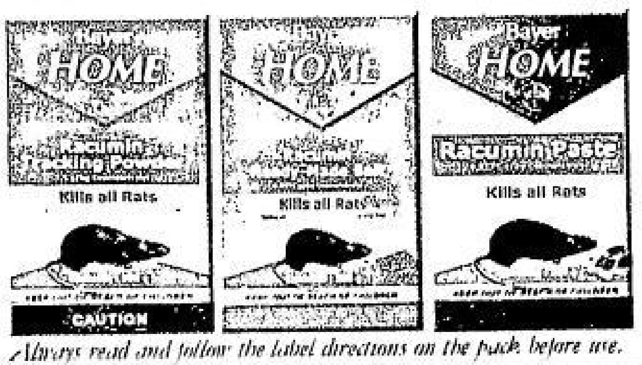

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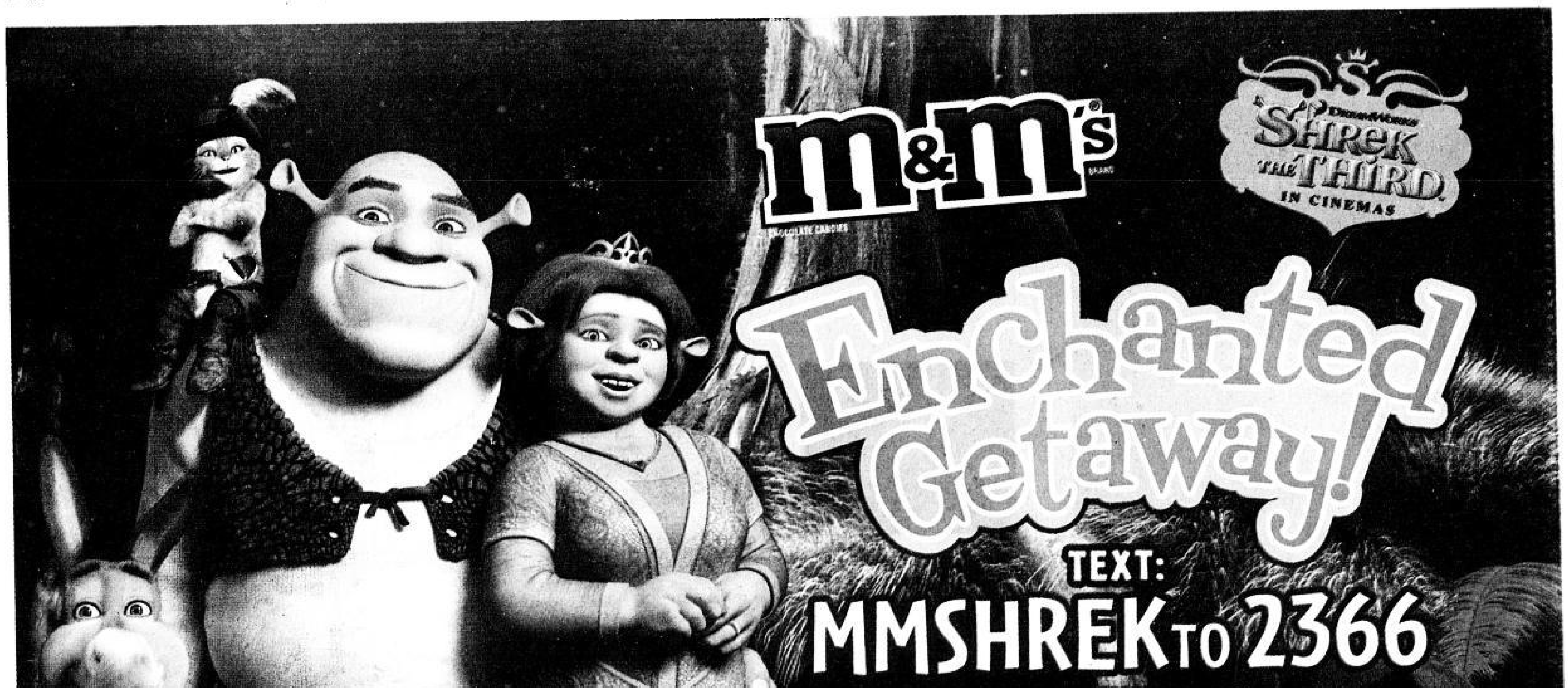
Bayer Environmental Science



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1. **There are two ways of joining the M&M's® Enchanted Getaway promotion:**
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     - b. To join the promo, text **MMSHREK RAFFLE CODE** and send to 2366 for Globe, Kapamilya Sim, Touch Mobile, Sun Cellular, Smart, Addict Mobile and Talk & Text Subscribers. P2.50 will be charged per text message sent to Globe, Kapamilya Sim, Touch Mobile, Smart, Addict Mobile and Talk & Text subscribers. P2.00 will be charged for Sun Cellular subscribers.
     - c. To validate your entry, you have **to register** once by texting **MMSHREK REG NAME/AGE/GENDER/ADDRESS** and send **to 2366.** Registration is free of charge.
       Example:
       To send entries: MMSHREK3 B5678
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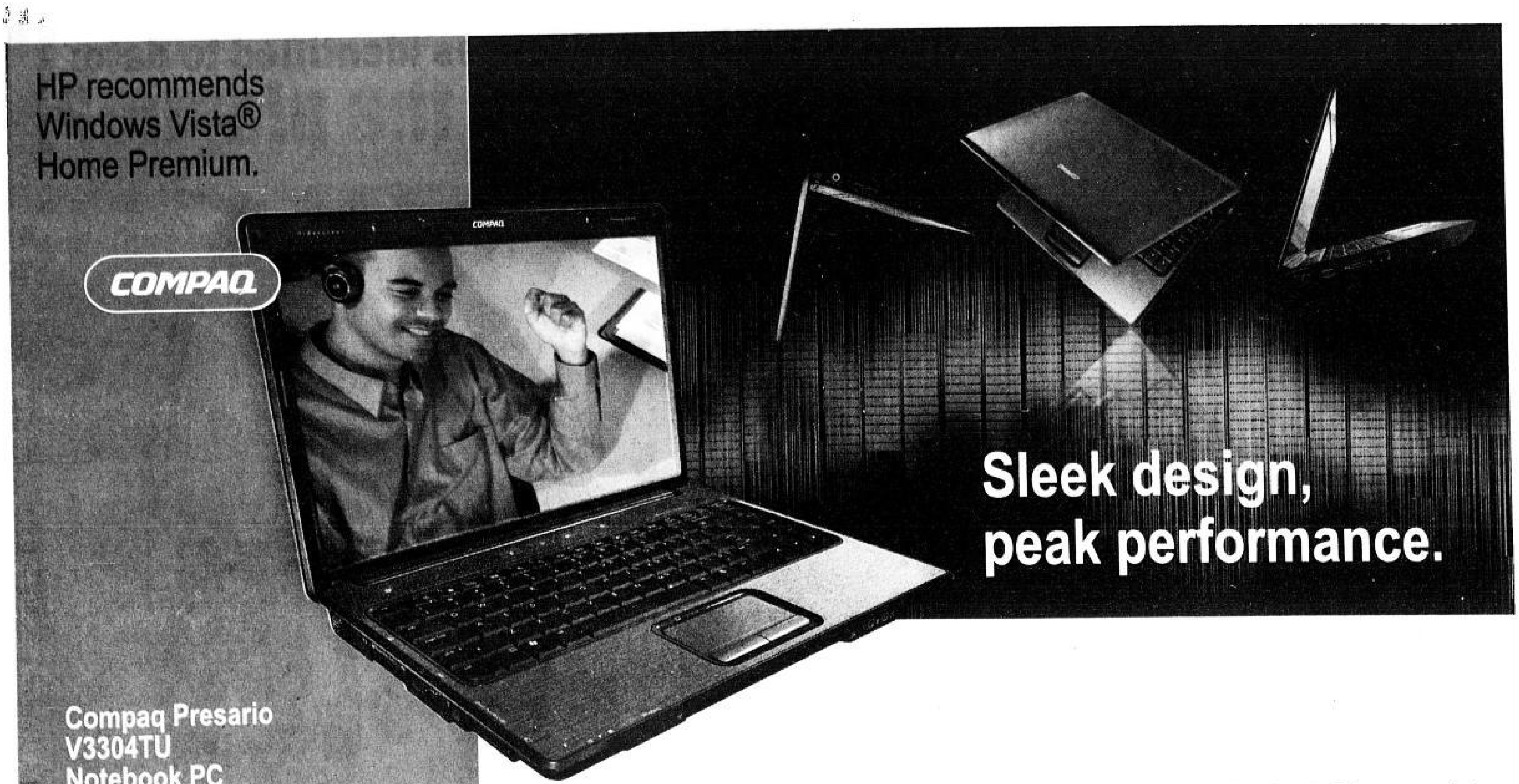
     - d. **M&M's®** Chocolate wrappers with the stickers must be kept and shall be presented for verification purposes in order to claim the prize.
   - B. The second one is through mail:
     - a. Consumer purchases any pack of M&M's® Chocolate Candies (without sticker) and mails the empty wrapper to:
       Master Foods Philippines, Inc.
       11th Flr., Tower 1, The Enterprise Center, Paseo de Roxas cor. Ayala Avenue, Makati City 1229
2. Promo will run from May 15 to July 31, 2007.
3. Total prizes: a 6D/5N stay in a castle in Europe (France) for 4 people, 100 units Apple I-pod Shuffles 1 GB and 20 units Sony Playstation Portable.
4. Draws dates: Minor Draw on July 2, 2007
   - 50 winners of Apple IPod Shuffle (1GB)
   - 10 winners of Sony Playstation Portable

   Grand Draw: August 3, 2007
   - 6D/5N stay in a castle in Europe (France) for a group of 4
   - 50 winners of Apple IPod Shuffle (1GB)
   - 10 winners of Sony Playstation Portable
5. All entries are cumulative. Non-winning entries will qualify for the succeeding draws. The more entries sent the more chances of winning.
6. Cut-off dates for the minor draw is on July 1, 2007 at 11:59pm. For the Grand Draw, cut-off will be on July 31, 2007 at 11:59pm.
7. Draws will be held at the ABS-CBN Interactive office in the presence of a representative from BFAD, ABS-CBN Interactive and Master Foods Philippines, Inc.
8. Winners will receive a call with accompanying instructions on how to claim their prize. For those who joined through SMS, they must be prepared to surrender the M&M's® Chocolate wrapper with the winning raffle code. Damaged altered and/or tampered stickers, as well as wrappers with no promo sticker and vice versa will be disqualified and rendered invalid. For those who mailed their entries, they must present 2 valid identification cards as proof that they are the rightful winners.
9. Verification procedures will be enforced to ensure validity and authenticity of the promo sticker and wrapper or the identification cards. Representatives from BFAD and Master Foods Philippines Inc. will conduct the verification procedures.
10. Verified winners will then be eligible to claim their prize.
11. Prizes are non-transferable and may not be converted to cash except for the grand prize. Cash equivalent of the package trip to Europe is PhP 500,000.00.
12. All prizes are tax paid.
13. Children under 13 years old are not eligible to join the promo.
14. All employees of Master Foods Philippines Inc, Duty Free Philippines and their agencies and third party partners, Click Licensing, and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity and affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.



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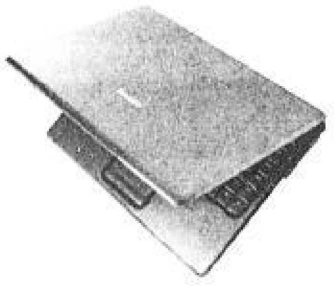

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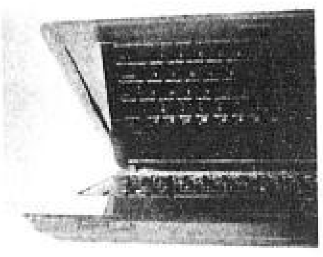

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Streamlined and intuitive, like every other aspect of this machine. One simple arm movement is all it takes to lift your screen into position.

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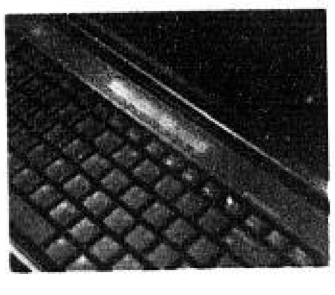

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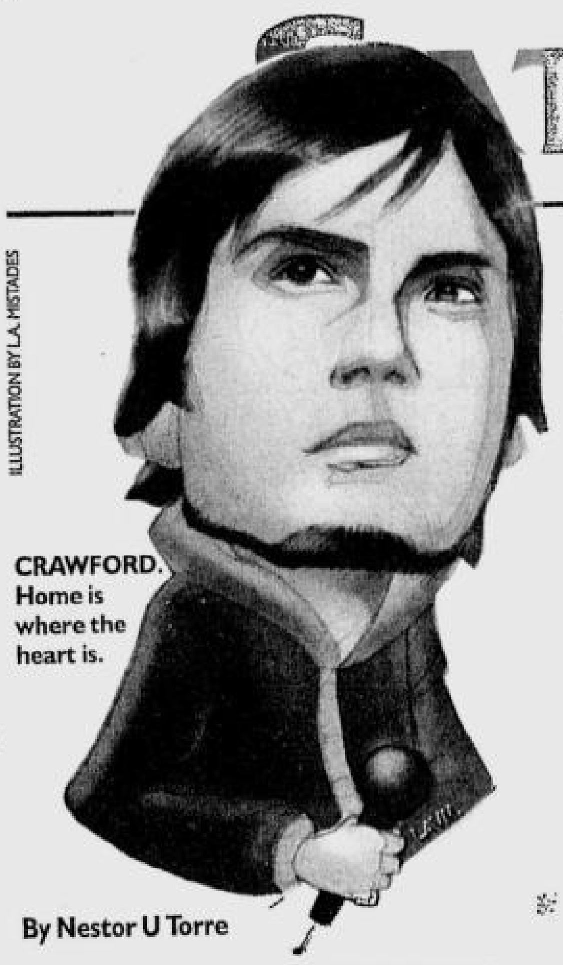


ILLUSTRATION BY L.A. MISTADES

CRAWFORD. Home is where the heart is.

Comebacks and reinventions in show business

ROCES. Her return to acting shouldn't end up as a one-shot deal.

By Nestor U Torre

AFTER YEARS SPENT FORGing a stellar performing and recording career in Europe, Billy Crawford is trying to make it again here at home.

His success overseas cannot be gainsaid and has impressed many people here. But, quite expectedly, some testier folks have been raising their eyebrows and wondering aloud why Billy has opted to focus on his home base this year.

European career

Is his European career on the downswing?, they rhetorically inquire. So, their welcome has been less than warm, and they snittily require that Billy "prove" that he deserves to be regarded here as an international star.

Of course, the young singing-dancing sensation feels no such compunction to charm his way into his local naysayers' hearts—so they'll just have to love him or lump him on their own steam.

Instead of reacting to the brickbats being hurled at him, Billy is focusing on the dance tilt he's mentoring on GMA-7, the winners of which will comprise his back-up dance group in his gigs.

For her part, Rosanna Roces has been inactive on the show biz scene for quite a long while. But, now that she's gotten her weight problem under control, she's feeling the cameras anew.

Earlier this week, we saw her playing the mother of the title character in the new Channel 2 soap, "Ysabella." Rosanna acted up a storm as she traded barbs and blows with sundry vile and heartless characters.

We appreciated Rosanna's all-out intensity, but the scene went overboard in terms of heaving histrionics and overly verbose and lush dialogue.

Confrontation

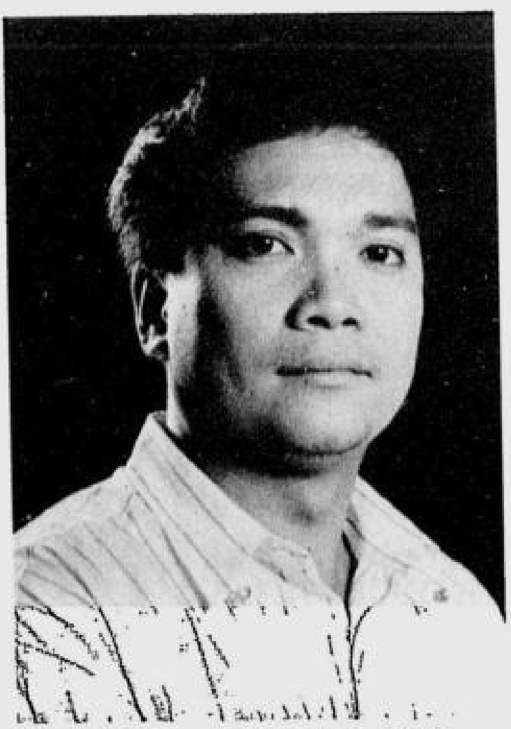
In addition, that confrontation scene ended quite predictably, with Rosanna's character hurtling down a long flight of stairs—to her death! So, Rosanna's comeback vehicle has turned out to be of very short duration—unless she occasionally comes back as a ghost!

We trust that other offers will come Rosanna's way, so that her latest comeback won't end up as a one-shot deal. To improve her prospects, she may decide to be less *palaban* and more cooperative in terms of work ethic. The talent is still there, so it should be given every chance to flower.

On the classical music front, we're glad that, after more than 10 years as the lone Filipino member of the Los Angeles Opera and Master Chorale, outstanding tenor Sal Malaki is back in town for a limited series of performances.

We worked with Sal before he shifted his performance base to the States, and admire his musical gift, intelligence, and compelling artistic temperament. We hope that Sal enjoys his current performance stint here so much that, in time, he'll opt to perform in the Philippines for keeps.

We're all for international careers, but when push comes to shove, the most important work to be done is *here*.



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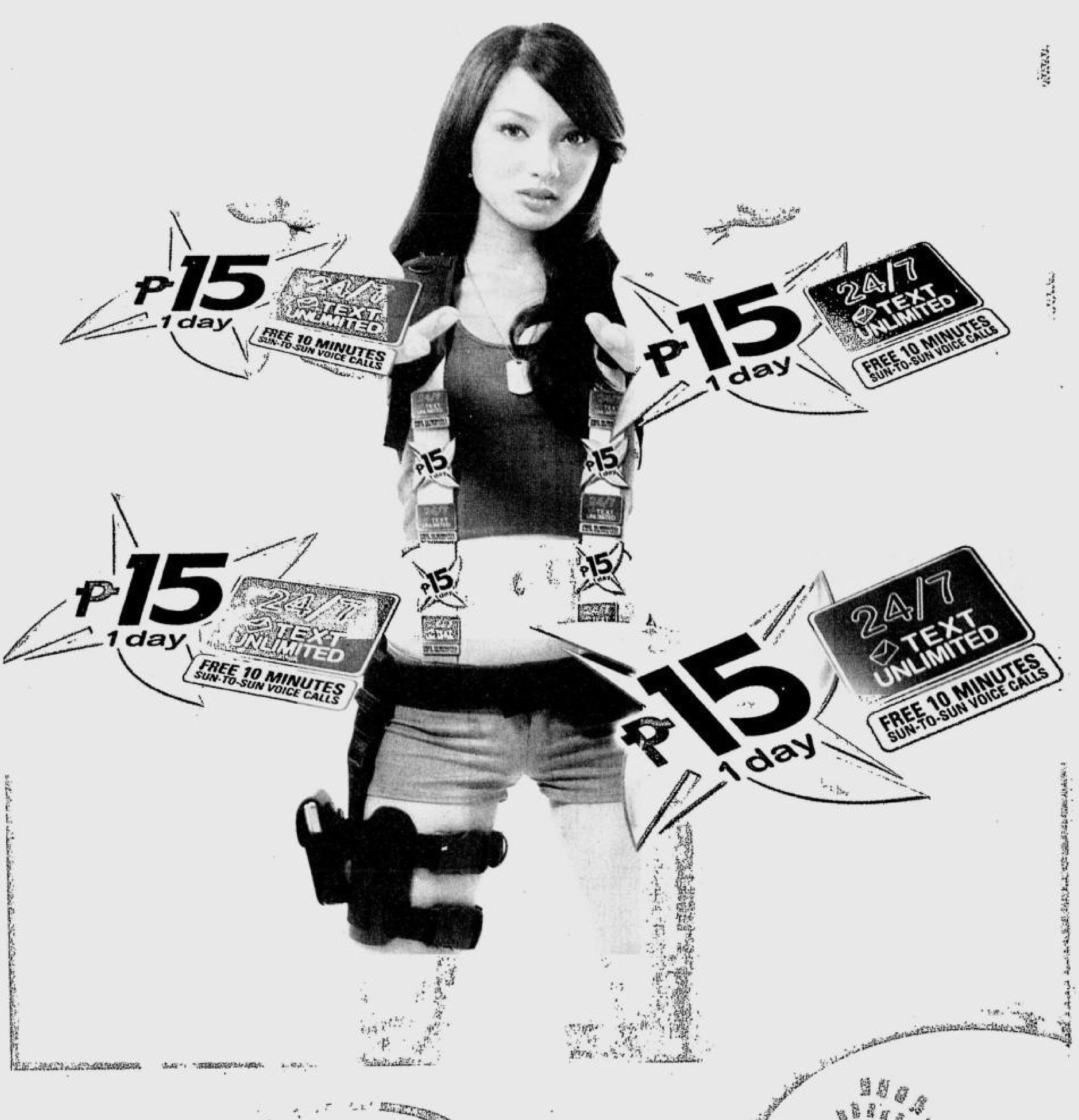

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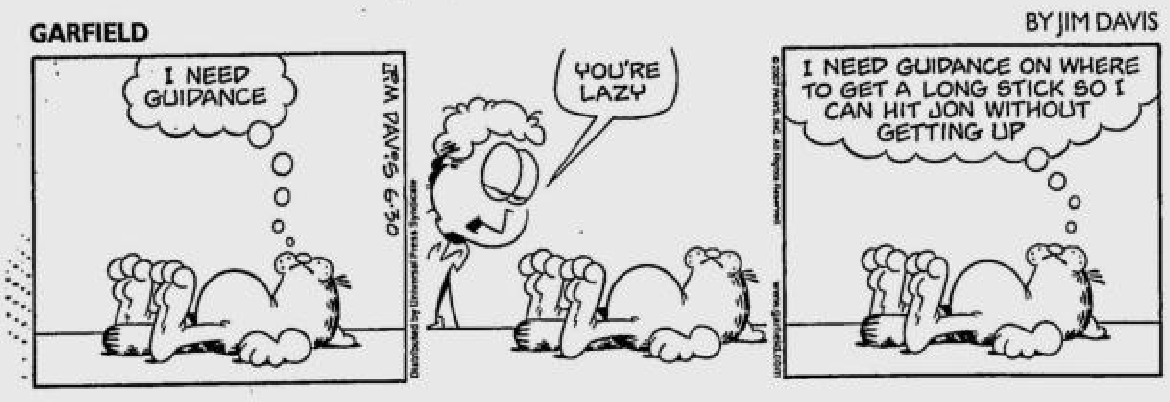
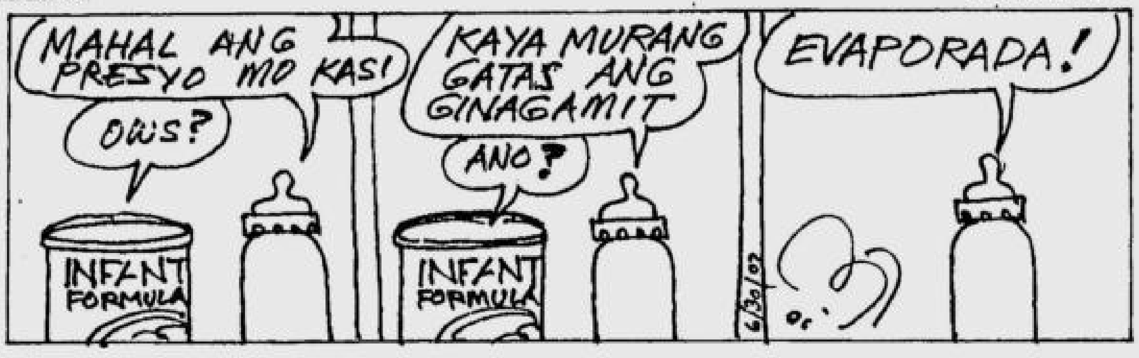
BY JIM DAVIS


I NEED GUIDANCE
YOU'RE LAZY
I NEED GUIDANCE ON WHERE TO GET A LONG STICK SO I CAN HIT JON WITHOUT GETTING UP
JIM DAVIS 6-30

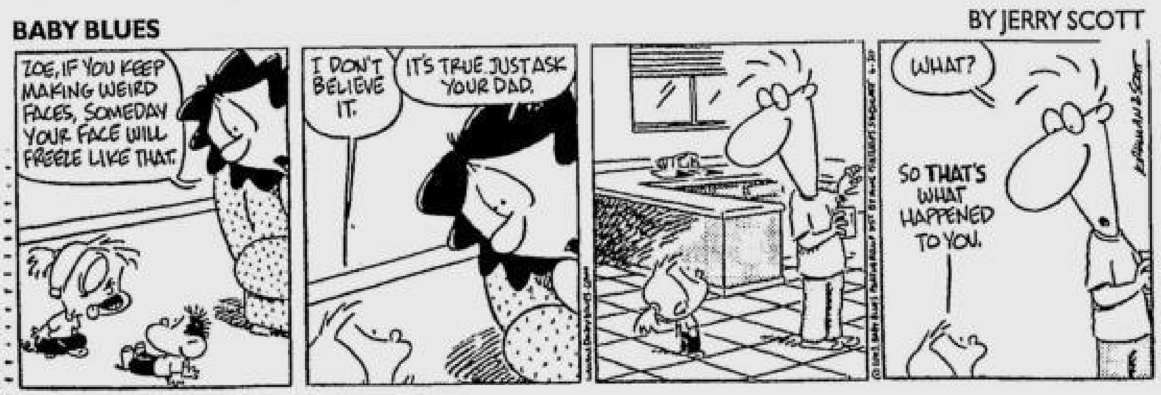
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MAHAL ANG PRESYO MO KASI
OWS?
KAYA MURANG GATAS ANG GINAGAMIT
ANO?
EVAPORADA!
INFANT FORMULA
INFANT FORMULA
6/30/07

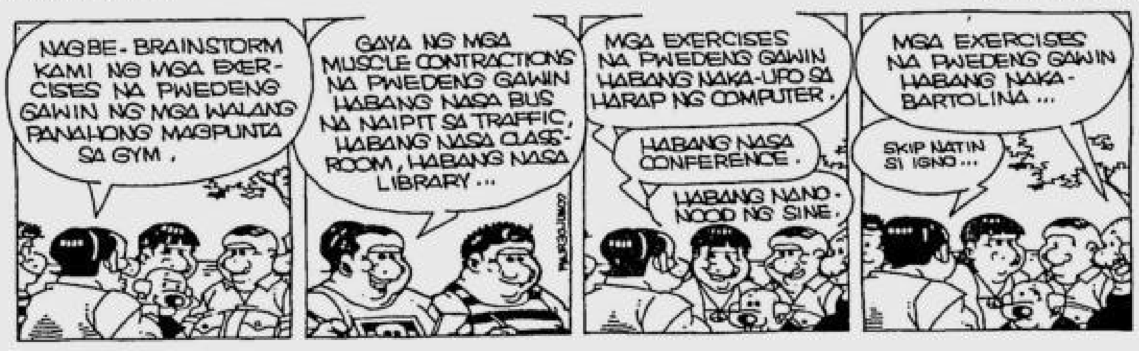
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


ZOE, IF YOU KEEP MAKING WEIRD FACES, SOMEDAY YOUR FACE WILL FREEZE LIKE THAT.
I DON'T BELIEVE IT.
IT'S TRUE. JUST ASK YOUR DAD.
WHAT?
SO THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU.

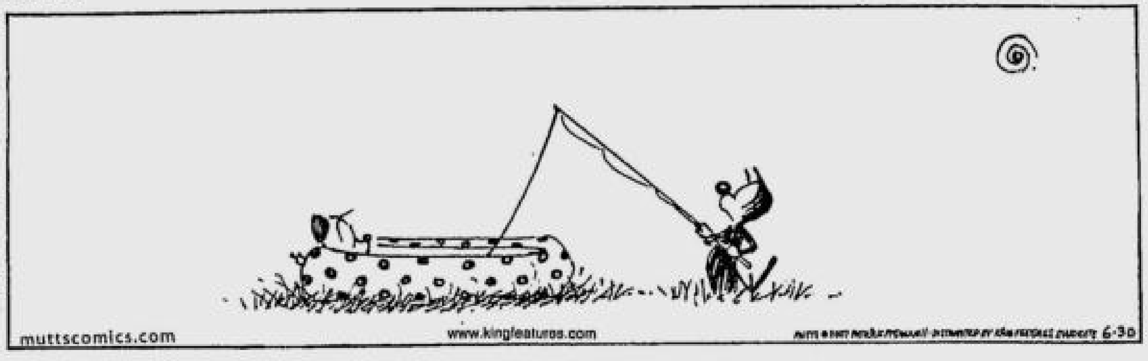
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAGBE-BRAINSTORM KAMI NG MGA EXERCISES NA PWEDENG GAWIN NG MGA WALANG PANAHONG MAGPUNTA SA GYM.
GAYA NG MGA MUSCLE CONTRACTIONS NA PWEDENG GAWIN HABANG NASA BUS NA NAIPIT SA TRAFFIC, HABANG NASA CLASSROOM, HABANG NASA LIBRARY...
MGA EXERCISES NA PWEDENG GAWIN HABANG NAKA-UPO SA HARAP NG COMPUTER.
HABANG NASA CONFERENCE.
HABANG NANONOOD NG SINE.
MGA EXERCISES NA PWEDENG GAWIN HABANG NAKA-BARTOLINA...
SKIP NATIN SI IGNO...

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL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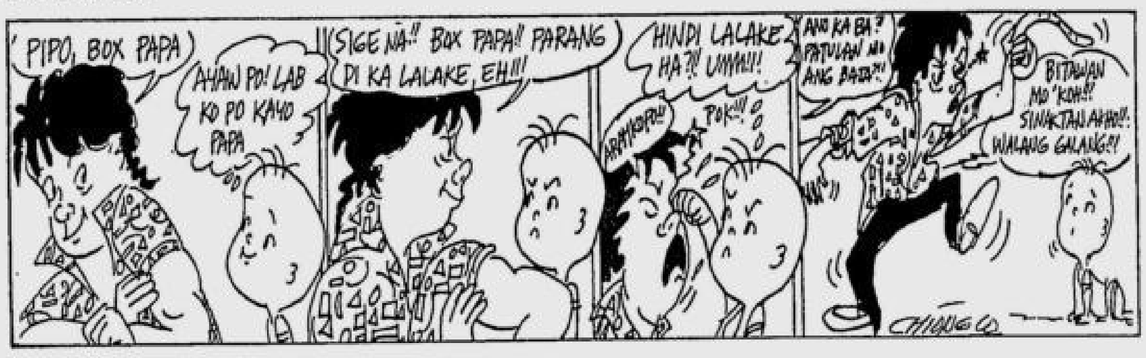
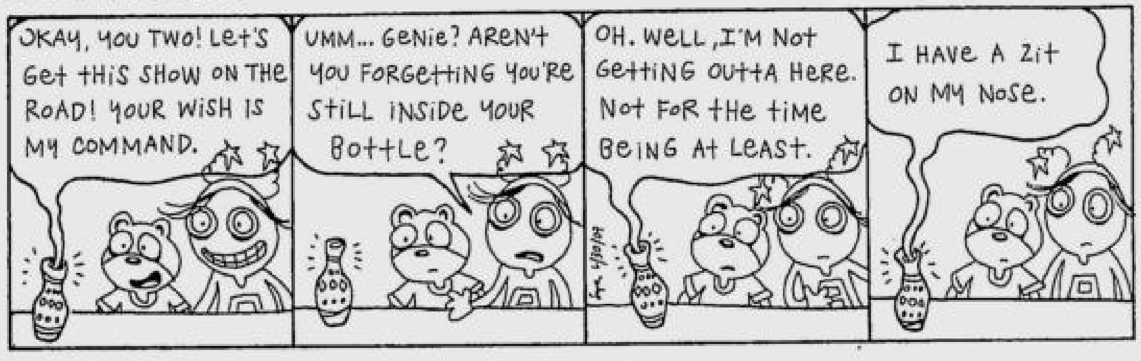
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PIPO, BOX PAPA
AHAW PO! LAB KO PO KAYO PAPA
SIGE NA!! BOX PAPA!! PARANG DI KA LALAKE, EH!!!
HINDI LALAKE HA?!! UMM!!
ARAYKOPO!!
POK!!!
ANO KA BA?! PATULAN MO ANG BATA?!
BITAWAN MO 'KOH!! SINAKTAN AKO!! WALANG GALANG!!
CHIONGLO

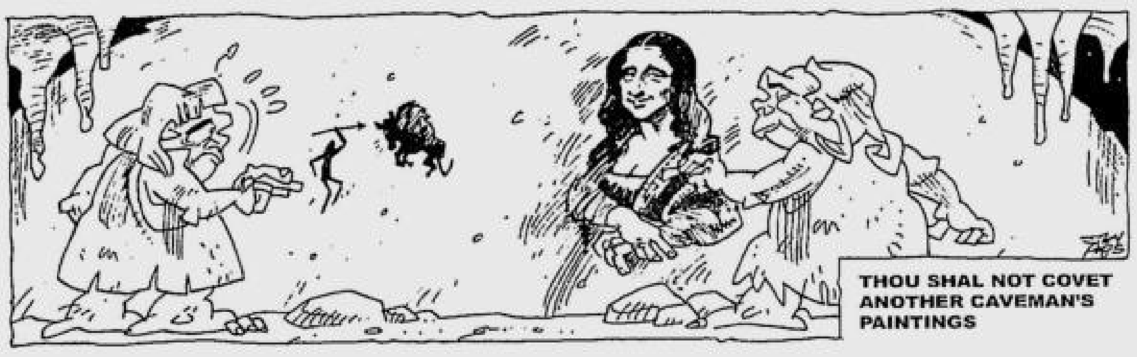
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


OKAY, YOU TWO! LET'S GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD! YOUR WISH IS MY COMMAND.
UMM... GENIE? AREN'T YOU FORGETTING YOU'RE STILL INSIDE YOUR BOTTLE?
OH. WELL, I'M NOT GETTING OUTTA HERE. NOT FOR THE TIME BEING AT LEAST.
I HAVE A ZIT ON MY NOSE.

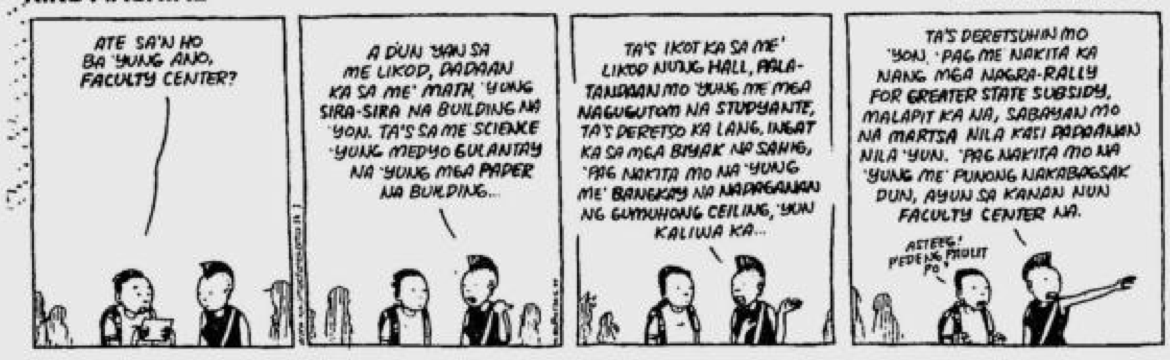
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


THOU SHAL NOT COVET ANOTHER CAVEMAN'S PAINTINGS

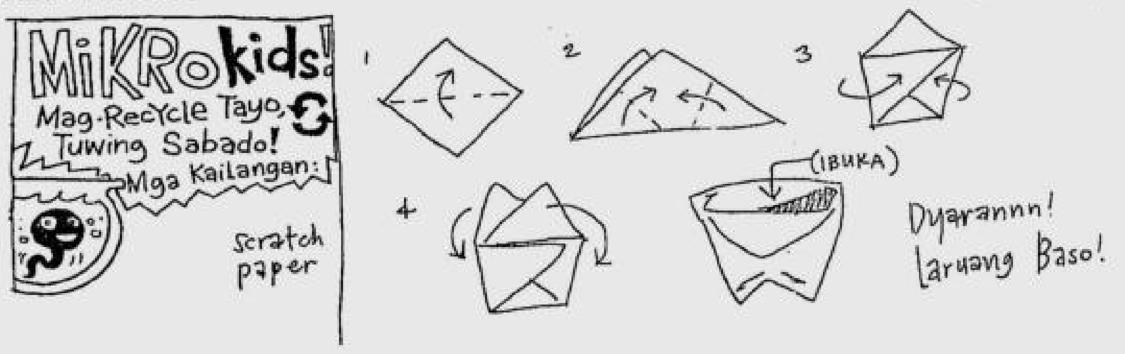
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


ATE SA'N HO BA 'YUNG ANO, FACULTY CENTER?
A DUN 'YAN SA ME LIKOD, DADAAN KA SA ME' MATH, 'YUNG SIRA-SIRA NA BUILDING NA 'YON. TA'S SA ME SCIENCE 'YUNG MEDYO GULANTAY NA 'YUNG MGA PAPER NA BUILDING...
TA'S IKOT KA SA ME' LIKOD NUNG HALL, PALATANDAAN MO 'YUNG ME MGA NAGUGUTOM NA STUDYANTE, TA'S DERETSO KA LANG, INGAT KA SA MGA BIYAK NA SAHIG, 'PAG NAKITA MO NA 'YUNG ME' BANGKAY NA NADAGANAN NG GUMUHONG CEILING, 'YUN KALIWA KA...
TA'S DERETSUHIN MO 'YON. 'PAG ME NAKITA KA NANG MGA NAGRA-RALLY FOR GREATER STATE SUBSIDY, MALAPIT KA NA, SABAYAN MO NA MARTSA NILA KASI DADAANAN NILA 'YUN. 'PAG NAKITA MO NA 'YUNG ME' PUNONG NAKABAGSAK DUN, AYUN SA KANAN NUN FACULTY CENTER NA.
ASTEEG! PEDENG PAOLIT PO.

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MiKRO kids!
Mag-Recycle Tayo, Tuwing Sabado!
Mga Kailangan:
scratch paper
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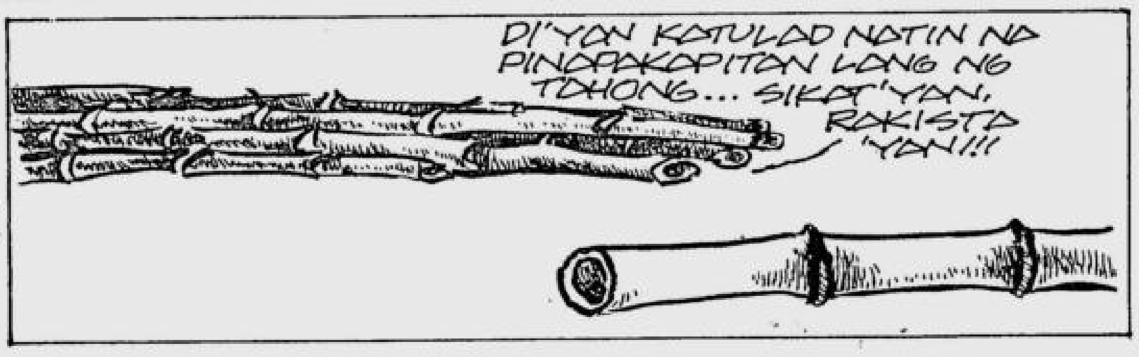
Dyarannn! Laruang Baso!

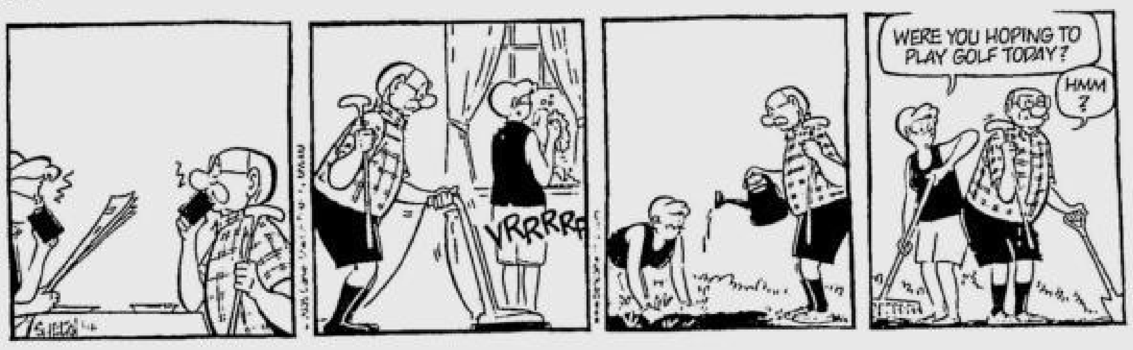
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


DI'YAN KATULAD NATIN NA PINAPAKAPITAN LANG NG TAHONG... SIKAT 'YAN, ROKISTA 'YAN!!!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


VRRRRR
WERE YOU HOPING TO PLAY GOLF TODAY?
HMM ?

DAILY CROSSWORD

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16 Dove home
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18 Christmas pair of song
20 Kett of comics
22 Rancidity
23 Mortgage attachments
25 Moving vehicle
26 Wheel stoppers
31 Sunshine St.
34 Regional tongue
35 Chi-town paper
36 Sailor's direction
37 __ Domingo
38 Level in London
39 Ointment
40 Despotic
42 Actor Carney
43 Very necessary things
44 Clash
45 Fully grown
47 Ranking nuns
54 Sp. maiden
55 One at a time
57 Christian letters
58 Many moons
59 Howe of hockey
60 Fish catcher
61 "Why __ Thou forsaken me?"
62 Perspires
63 Coll. seniors' test

DOWN
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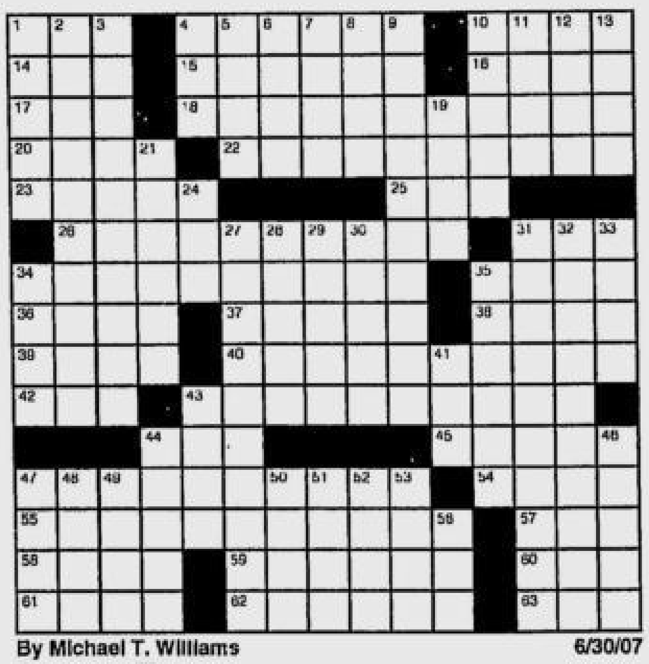
2 Like some entrances
3 Stocking connection
4 Musical dir.
5 Burden
6 Fermentation foam
7 Art Deco designer
8 Dice throw
9 Traditional scale
10 Huskies in Storrs
11 Small bay
12 French religious figs.
13 HST's lady
19 Portuguese explorer
21 Garland for the head
24 Schuss
27 Companions of chocolate bunnies
28 Bumps off
29 Painter Rousseau
30 Two quartets together
31 Creating a split
32 "Kinflicks" writer
33 Eve's second
34 Island in the Antilles
35 Threesomes
41 Shooters' grp.
43 Shucks!
44 Floorboard support
46 Personal preference
47 God of Memphis
48 Hindu music
49 Turner and Clanton
50 Hold in the hold
51 Certain
52 Mother of Brunhilde
53 Tizzy
56 His: Fr.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By Michael T. Williams
Clearwater, FL

6/30/07

Friday's Puzzle Solved

S	I	S	■	M	A	J	A	■	L	U	T	H	E	R
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6/30/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a real sense of style! You know how to enter a room. Many of you master a particular technique. You have good money savvy, and when you're strongly motivated, you really go after what you want. You like your world to be secure; hence, you have many favorite haunts. Something you've been involved with the past nine years will fade away now.

Birthdate of: Vincent D'Onofrio, actor; Marlin Jackson, football cornerback; Buddy Rich, drummer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Today's Full Moon might put you at odds with family members as well as bosses and external authority figures. Just do what you can do.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a mildly accident-prone day because of today's Full Moon and how it hits the chart Taurus in particular. Avoid knee-jerk reactions.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Money issues might plague you today. What you have to seek is a reasonable balance between your own interests and pleasing the interests of others.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Today's Full Moon is the only Full Moon directly opposite your sign all year. This means you are part of the formula because every Full Moon is a Sun/Moon opposition. Be extra-patient with loved ones.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Be patient with co-workers, and also cut yourself some slack today. Today's Full Moon causes stress to a lot of people; you can sense this.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Don't be surprised if friends or members of groups have an overreaction to something you say. Don't take it personally. It's just heightened emotions due to today's Full Moon.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Step gingerly when dealing with authority figures today—parents, bosses, VIPs, teachers and the police. You can't keep everybody happy; therefore, just please yourself.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): People are extremely opinionated today, especially about racial issues, religion and politics. In large measure, this is because of today's Full Moon. Take everything with a grain of salt.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Financial matters concern you today. You might feel confused when shopping. To be on the safe side, save all your receipts. Good luck.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Today is the only Full Moon day all year in your sign. It might make you feel more emotional about everything; then again, it might not. Observe what happens around you today.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You might come up with some insightful observations about health matters or how to deal with small pets. (Curious combination, I know.) Today's Full Moon highlights these things.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Discussions with friends will be deeper or more profound or will be more emotional in some way today. Today's Full Moon puts an edge on all your exchanges with others

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

	1	8			5			
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				1				
9		5				7		
			6		8			4
	8							1
			7			5	3	

Difficulty Level ★★★★

6/30

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

5	6	1	7	3	9	8	2	4
4	9	2	1	6	8	5	3	7
7	8	3	4	2	5	1	6	9
8	3	7	2	5	6	4	9	1
2	1	4	8	9	7	3	5	6
9	5	6	3	1	4	7	8	2
3	7	9	5	4	2	6	1	8
6	4	5	9	8	1	2	7	3
1	2	8	6	7	3	9	4	5

Difficulty Level ★★★★

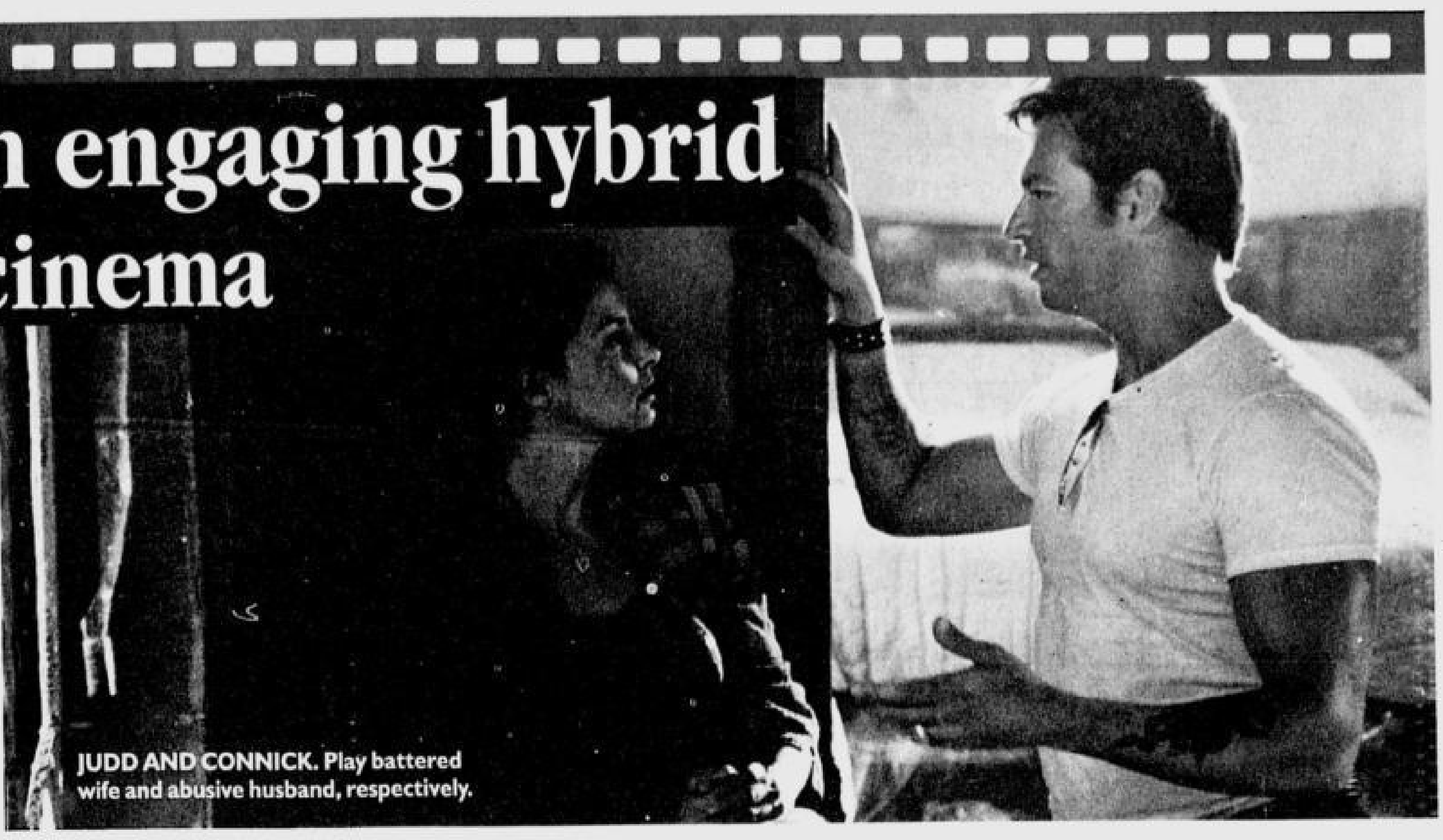
NOW SHOWING

Judd, Connick in engaging hybrid of theater and cinema

By Rito P. Asilo

"Bug"

D: William Friedkin
S: Ashley Judd, Harry Connick Jr., Michael Shannon



JUDD AND CONNICK. Play battered wife and abusive husband, respectively.

WILLIAM FRIEDKIN EXAMINES the destructive reach of paranoia in his big-screen adaptation of Tracy Letts' off-Broadway hit play. The searing psychological drama follows Agnes White (Ashley Judd), a lonely waitress who finds solace from her bitter and battered life when she meets sensitive drifter Peter Evans (Michael Shannon, who reprises the role he played in the stage version), a Gulf War veteran who's similarly haunted by the demons of his past.

Agnes and Peter form an instant bond: She still grieves over the unsolved disappearance of her 6-year-old son 10 years ago, while he cowers in fear from what he believes is a worsening bug infestation that resulted from his four-year incarceration in an army hospital after a tumultuous stint in the Syrian desert.

In a shabby motel room, they feed off—and find comfort in—each other's paranoia, until a new arrival threatens their romantic albeit schizophrenic partnership: Jerry Goss (a beefed-up Harry Connick Jr.), Agnes' abusive husband, who's just been released from state prison.

If you expect to be grossed out by a swarm of hairy, slimy creatures sucking the life out of the film's luckless, gutless characters, you'll be sorely disappointed. The bugs in Friedkin's intriguing feature multiply exponentially only in Peter's mind—and eventually "infect" the vulnerable Agnes!

The 71-year-old filmmaker behind the critically-acclaimed '70s motion pictures, "The Exorcist," "The French Connection," and "The Boys in the Band," returns to fighting form by creating a noirish drama that showcases Judd in an unconventionally challenging role.

She goes toe to thespic toe with Shannon, who impresses with his fierce, knuckle-busting portrayal of the tortured war veteran. Judd and Shannon immerse themselves so completely in the fear, pain and loneliness of their characters that, at some point before the film reaches its gut-wrenching climax, exhaustion and sympathy-fatigue creep in.

A beefy Connick sheds his clean-cut good looks and jazzy wholesomeness in a welcome cameo as a rugged antihero, while stage veteran Brian F. O'Byrne ("Doubt"), as the military doctor who pursues the paranoid-schizophrenic protagonist, lends his avuncular appeal to the claustrophobic proceedings.

Friedkin retools the film medium's storytelling conventions and adds a theatrical style and sensibility that heighten the disturbing tale's dramatic arc. From the production's set pieces and lighting design to its blocking and camerawork, the theatrical aesthetics are obvious.

Under Friedkin's direction, this unique media hybrid works—but only to a point. After establishing how high the stakes are for the lead characters, you also realize that cinematic art—more than style and technical savvy—works best when it doesn't merely rely on flashy but superfluous narrative excesses.

Paris Hilton learns the hard way

By Behn Cervantes

THE LAST TIME I READ ABOUT Paris Hilton, she was on the front page again! But, the story had nothing to do with the City of Romance nor the colorful change of seasons in France, it documented Hilton's latest "gimmick."

Hilton has got to be one of the most boring of international figures. She's a public monster created by the media of the 21st century. The paparazzi have turned the hedonistic hotel heiress into a pop icon through the gossip magazines and tabloids that chronicle her racy night life, her multiple, short-lived romances, her dubious entry into the fashion and television worlds—not to mention her infamous and self-documented sex video.

The headlines declared: "Hilton sent back to jail in hysterics." These days, when the press prints the name, Paris Hilton, they're *not* referring to the pricey hotel!

HILTON. Finally gets her comeuppance.

Heiress

While tall and undoubtedly attractive, there's really nothing much going for this heiress, who can seemingly get away with stunts that are socially taboo. She stays up all night in the trendiest dance clubs, drinks till the wee hours of the morning, and even admits to the "occasional" use of prohibited drugs.

Hilton is obviously no role model for the young. She is without question one of today's symbols of the freewheeling irresponsible soul. Why does she get away with it? Well, mainly because the Hilton part of her name can afford to ignore social conventions and, until recently, the laws of society.

After repeated warnings for drunken driving, a no-nonsense judge sentenced the starlet to jail—with no ifs or buts about it. That firm judgment was global news, of course. The blonde socialite was initially sentenced to jail, even if it was only within the confines of her comfortable home. After all, the Hilton family can afford the best legal help to bend the law somewhat.

The Hilton family descends from tycoon Conrad Hilton. The crafty businessman turned his hotel venture into a global business chain. The man himself was not above enjoying life, and socialized with the colorful likes of Zsa Zsa Gabor and Ann Miller. For nine months, he was also the father-in-law of the beautiful Elizabeth Taylor when the then 17-year-old MGM star married Nicky Hilton.

Histrionics

What elated me was that Superior Judge Michael Sauer wasn't impressed by Hilton's high-powered attorneys, nor the erring star's histrionics. He charged that Sheriff Lee Baca had no right to prematurely release the TV starlet three days into her sentence, due to an unsubstantiated "medical condition."

Lady Justice is supposedly blind, so she weighs only the gravity of the offense and not the popularity or the oft-repeated apologies of the accused party.

It's such a relief when the law is enforced without consideration for wealth, fame, or power. Those who believe and even wallow in their own publicity, take heed!

Christina Aguilera goes back to basics

AGUILERA. Rocks Manila on July 6.

"IT'S CRAZY." That's how Christina Aguilera, the unstoppable powerhouse, described the challenges she had to face while making "Back to Basics," her latest compilation of vocal tricks reminiscent of old Hollywood glamour.

Different

"I never went into making this a double album, or thinking it would be. It just happened to be that way because what I was getting on the Linda Perry side was so different from what I was getting from Premiere and other beat makers," she confessed.

She was so into both worlds and loving it, so she thought that she should give her audience the best of both. "And I had to record it while I was planning my wedding. It was a lot on my plate!"

It was a lot, yes. But, as everyone knows, her efforts eventually paid off. Not only did "Back to Basics" earn platinum status in the United States—and became a huge hit around the globe—Christina also received a Grammy for "Ain't No Other Man," the upbeat first single.

"Stripped," her previous outing, was nothing like "Back to Basics." Although Christina's powerful voice is unmistakable in both albums, we saw Christina as a dark dominatrix, singing about empowerment and self-acceptance in "Stripped" as opposed to her alluring, platinum blonde hair and red lipstick image in "Back to Basics."

"I am the kind of artist who constantly likes to change and challenge myself, give my audience a new look and a new me." Hence, a sound that is a modern twist to the '20s, '30s, and '40s-style jazz, blues, and feel-good music.

Taste

Manila audiences will get a taste of her new style as she takes centerstage on July 6 at the Bonifacio Global City, Open Field, for the most anticipated show this year—"Christina Aguilera: Back to Basics Live in Manila." Call 891-9999.

Special discounts await Globe subscribers" Just text AGUILERA to 2222 for free information on Globe's Christina Aguilera promos.

Fresh twist on Sinatra classics in Bublé's latest album

By Noelani Torre

THE TITLE OF MICHAEL Bublé's third album may be "Call Me Irresponsible," but that's the last thing you ought to call him. Smart and savvy, yes. A good strategist, most definitely. After all, we're talking about a guy who knows well the truth of that good, old show biz adage, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

"Broke" it certainly isn't. As usual, Bublé's latest release is as smooth and charming as his previous one. Once again turning to the past for inspiration, the Canadian singer continues to channel Frank Sinatra in his third outing and, yet again, it proves successful.

BUBLÉ. Good strategist.

Bublé's smart enough not to mess with a good thing, though there are elements in this third release that hint at future changes. "Call Me Irresponsible" features two originals, "Everything" and "Lost," both of which he cowrote.

Artistic standing

In his previous album, the singer's original song, "Home," became a chart-topping hit, and it looks like these new ones will be, too. Still, though coming up with his own material certainly ups the singer's artistic standing, it's doubtful that he'll ever release an all-originals album.

Standards are really Bublé's bread and butter, and he sings them very well. One of the nice things about his renditions of classic songs is the freshness he brings to oft-performed songs.

Opening track "The Best Is Yet to Come," for example, remains faithful to the original, while at the same time, he gives it a bit more swing. And, as always, the excellent band backing him up is spot-on, hitting just the right notes and working musical curlicues into all the right places.

The second track, "It Had Better Be Tonight," is equally fast-paced and spiced-up, after which the album takes a slow and jazzy turn when "Me and Mrs. Jones" shimmies out of the speakers. Here, Bublé's current sweetheart, British actress Emily Blunt, does a bit of background crooning.

As a whole, the album has an interesting and well-chosen playlist, including such unexpected numbers as a bossa nova rendering of Eric Clapton's "Wonderful Tonight" and a surprisingly non-cheesy reinterpretation of the Willie Nelson karaoke-favorite, "Always On My Mind."

Gospel treatment

Aside from the first track, other Sinatra classics include "I've Got the World on a String," "That's Life," and the title track. While being classy and stylish, Bublé's versions also have an interesting twist to them. "That's Life," for example, has a gospel treatment, complete with a full choir.

The reason why he's got a lot of staying power isn't just his excellent publicity machine (as some critics would have it), but because he does more than merely rehash old songs—he makes them his own!

Finding the right partner

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

HERE ARE TIPS ON CHOOSING partners in life. It's not an easy task, so we need to do this carefully and intelligently.

1. Look within, not without. A person's real self is embodied inside his physical structure. Don't be blinded by the whiteness of someone's teeth, his smooth skin, or aquiline nose. Look beyond his physical "covering."

2. Value the heart, not the pocket. Happiness derived from material wealth is superficial and temporary. A person's spiritual qualities, like wisdom, compassion and kindness, are his real treasures—they can't be stolen or lost. True wealth is not found in the bank but in the heart.

Priority list

3. Weigh your priorities. If material ambition ranks high on a couple's priority list, prepare for a life of conflict and competition. In school, we see how the struggle for academic honors pits one student against another. This results in envy, frustration and alienation. On the other hand, if spirituality is a couple's priority, they can expect love and harmony.

4. Control your expectations: How you are treated now is not necessarily how you'll be treated in a few years' time. Worldly relationships tend to "ferment" after the stage of courtship. A secure spiritual foundation and higher spiritual taste will help you weather marital storms.

5. Expect imperfections. You're just as imperfect as the next person. Be realistic: See the flaws, but also avoid being judgmental. Learn to respect others.

Tendency

6. Overlook the trivial, note the crucial. Watch out for a tendency towards violence, perversion and obsession.

7. Distinguish between lust and love. Lust is self-centered and demanding; while love is giving and unconditional. Lust leads to jealousy, anger and frustration. Love leads to kindness, concern and nurturing.

8. Ask for inputs. If you are too emotionally involved and can't see objectively, ask for advice. Mature people can tell whether a partnership is favorable or not. Pray for guidance from the Lord.

Joaqui Valdes makes bid for musical stardom

VALDES. Has finally found his own sound.

By Rito P. Asilo

WHEN WE GOT HOLD OF JOAQUI Valdes' debut album, "The Jazzanova Project," our expectations weren't high. In his teenage years, Joaqui was bursting with potential—he had a beautiful voice, but it was still finding its distinctive quality and identity. In the new album, the young singer reinvents himself and finally finds his own sound.

The album's playlist is composed of 12 tracks jazzed up in the *bossa nova* style. But then, spawned by the recent popularity of Sitti, there have simply been too many *bossa nova* albums of late, and the musical genre is tipping its saturation point.

After a number of spins in the CD player, the local *bossa's* breathy style and swaying rhythm become bland, generic—and tiring. (Recently, we even heard a *bossa* rendition of VST & Company's "Rock Baby Rock"—a fish-out-of-water experiment, to say the least.)

More improvisational

Fortunately, Joaqui's jazz-and-bossa fusion is a welcome treat. There have been few local male artists who have succeeded in redefining the sound. Bong Peñera ("The Samba Song") comes to mind, but his last album was released a quarter of a century ago.

Occasionally, Richard Merk dabbles in *bossa*, but his style is more improvisational and, therefore, not quite reverential to a song's melodic meter. Current jazz proponents include Mon David.

In his solo debut, Joaqui introduces this musical interweaving—with greater success. "Englishman in New York" starts the lineup auspiciously—it's groovesome and infectious, and the young singer's husky vocals quickly remind you of young British jazz sensation, Jamie Cullum.

Luckily, his predilection to jazz isn't a put-on. Take Al Green's "Let's Stay Together." Joaqui's aurally delectable cover, interspersed with intermittent scatting, is further spiced up by an occasional out-of-the-bar vibrato, which shows how much fun he's having..

Another pleasant surprise is Nyoy Volante's "Bored With You," whose lyrics drip with casual wit. Joaqui also deviates from the original arrangement of Eric Benet's "The Last Time" to avoid copycat comparison. He makes a fun number out of Burt Bacharach's "I'll Never Fall in Love Again," in which he sings a duet with Kyla.

Andrew Gold's "Never Let Her Slip Away," however, is the weakest link in this otherwise solid collection. Its languorous tempo strips the song of its original sentiment's earnestness. And some tracks need vocal adjustments: In Alessi's ""Oh Lori," Joaqui starts out with much too low a pitch as he sings, "I'd like to stay in love with you," and the expected transposition never comes.

This, however, provides Joaqui with an avenue to venture into free-style singing. The inclusion of Dave Brubeck's "Take 5" is likewise an inspired decision. The guy obviously knows his jazz!

Joaqui would have benefited more from his newfound style (his former preferences were of the R&B and musical-theater variety) if the album had included original songs.

Frequency

As a genre project, "Jazzanova" passes muster. There was a time in the past two decades when we could hardly keep up with the fevered frequency of jazz releases in the local market. But, times, as Bob Dylan frequently reminds us, they are a changing, indeed—and so does contemporary music.

These days, we seldom hear the free-flowing musical patter of the talented likes of John Kaizan Neptune, Dave Grusin, Al Jarreau, Dave Valentin, The Manhattan Transfer, Diane Schuur, Chick Correa, and Hiroshima.

So, thank God for small blessings—and for newcomers like Joaqui Valdes, who's brave enough to take the musical road less traveled!

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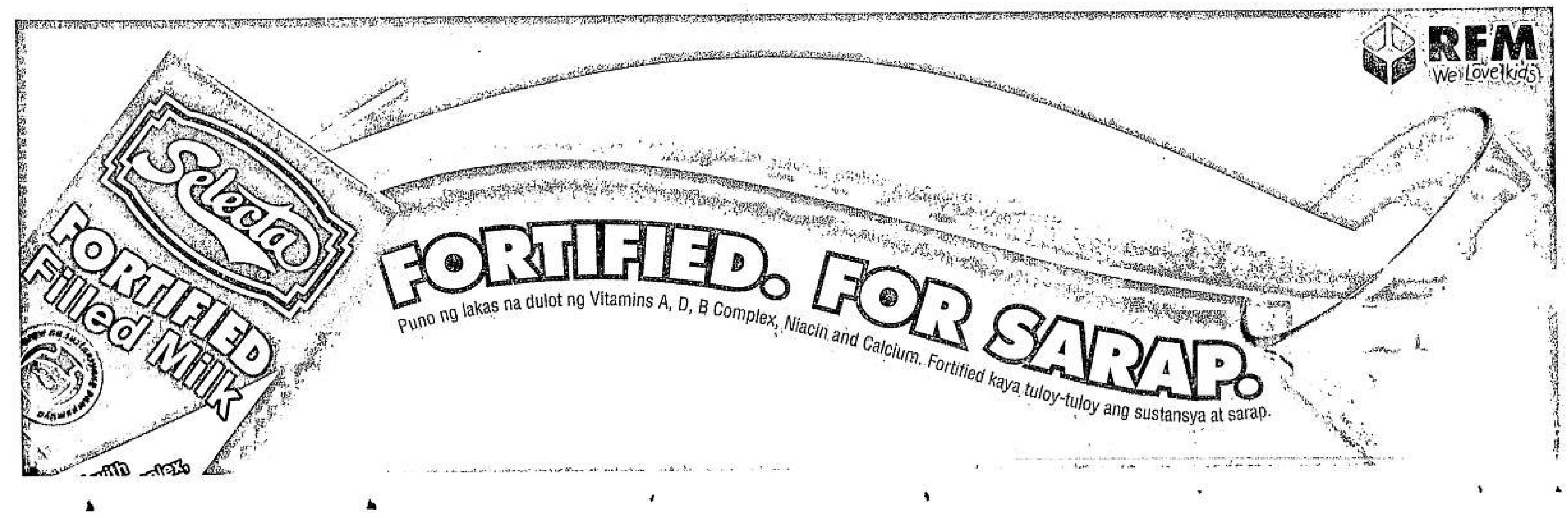
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SATURDAY *Special*

DANIEL RADCLIFFE:
'If Harry dies heroically, it'll be a good way for him to go'

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LONDON—RELAX, "HARRY Potter" fans. Even Daniel Radcliffe doesn't know if Harry Potter is one of the two characters who will die in J.K. Rowling's seventh and final installment of her bestselling series, which is due out on July 21.

Would he be sad in case Harry dies in "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows"? The young actor replied: "If Harry dies in a heroic way, then that's a good way for him to go."

West End triumph

Daniel, fresh from his West End triumph in the play, "Equus," wore a T-shirt at the Claridge's Hotel press con that proclaimed, "Flying saucers for everybody." He quipped, "Somebody asked me what I would do if I was the leader of a country. I would give flying saucers and unicycles. Everybody needs a unicycle in life!"

A day before this interview, we watched "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix" at the Warner Bros.' screening room in London. The highlight for us was seeing onscreen the scene that Daniel, Emma Watson, Rupert Grint, Evanna Lynch and Matthew Lewis filmed again and again when we visited the set at Leavesden Studios last year.

It's a reflection of the perfectionist nature of director David Yates (who will also direct the sixth film starting September) that this scene, which shows Harry and Dumbledore's army before they leave Hogwarts for London, ran for only a minute or so—but he did what seemed like a million and one takes!

Girlish voice

Thus, we heard Evanna say, in response to Daniel's question on how they would travel to London, "We fly, of course," so many times that her soft, girlish voice still rings in our ears to this day.

Always a smart and articulate interviewee, Daniel, who turns 18 on July 23, parried questions with the confidence he has always exuded at press cons since landing the role of the boy wizard in 2001.

Do you think Harry Potter will die in the final novel?

I have no idea, to be honest. There's certainly a possibility that Harry might die. I've been told recently that people are placing bets in Las Vegas about whether that happens or not—I find that hilarious!

Would you be sad if Harry dies? Rupert told us that he will be happy to see his character go with a bang.

No. If Harry dies in a fitting way—in a sort of heroic manner—then that's a good way for him to go. The thing about the "Harry Potter" books is that they're never simple. If Harry is going to live, which I'm starting to think he might, it doesn't mean that he won't incur terrible losses.

You signed up for the last two films. What were your main considerations for signing on?

One thing that signing on does is end speculation: Will he do the last two films? It's nice to be able to say to people, "I'm doing all seven films!" In terms of the considerations, specifically for the sixth film, one of the things that made me want to do it most was the thought of working with David Yates again.

Simplistic

Another reason, and this possibly sounds simplistic, is—I've already done five. I might as well do the last two! It seems stupid to suddenly turn around and say, "No, I'm not doing it anymore." I've come this far. It would be a shame for me to suddenly pull out.

Of the five films, this one probably took the most emotional toll on you. What resources did you draw upon to deal with the stuff that Harry had to go through?

Yates' idea was to bring in a grief counselor. I could never hope to understand the emotional pain of losing somebody. If I got to talk to somebody who understood the grieving process, then maybe I could tap into it more on an intellectual level.

That was obviously the biggest challenge. With the help of David and Gary Oldman (who plays Sirius Black), hopefully, I was able to do justice to that section of the book.

Will you elaborate on why Gary had to literally shake you before one scene?

This was before his death scene as Sirius. Having never grieved over the loss of someone in my life, I had trouble connecting to that scene. So, Gary said to me before we did one take, "Do you mind if I make this scene a bit more physical?" I thought he was going to give me a hug or something like that.

Eye contact

Instead, he grabbed me by the shoulders, shook me vigorously for about 30 seconds, and screamed at me! Then slowly, he started to back away while keeping eye contact. As he did that, the camera started rolling.

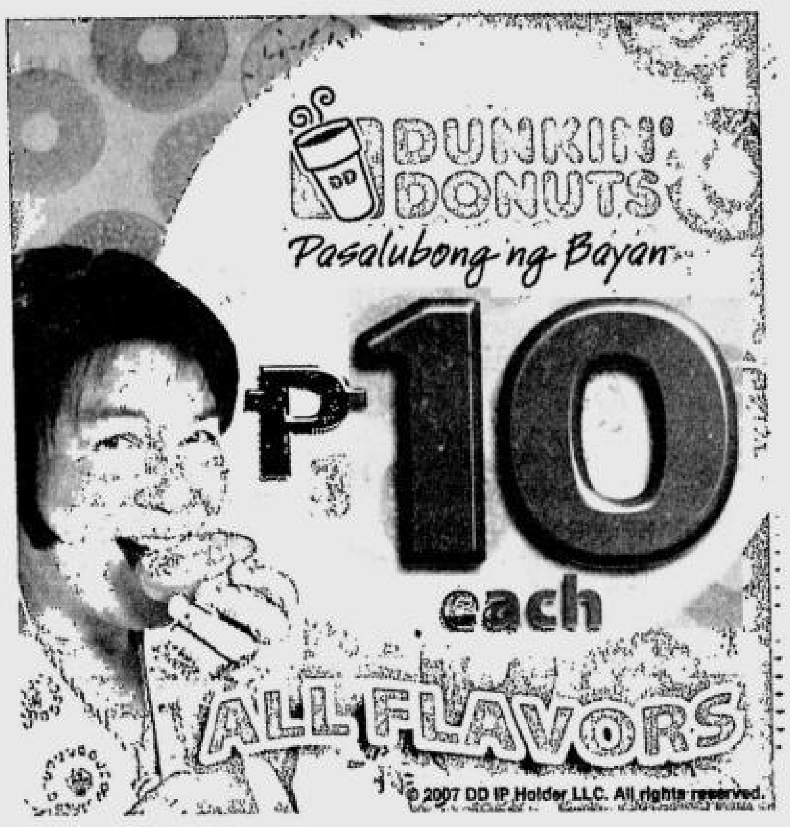
A peculiar thing happened: For a few seconds, I almost started to regress as a child. I suddenly found

DANIEL/12

RADCLIFFE. His biggest challenge was to understand the emotional pain of losing somebody.

PHOTO BY RUBEN V. NEPALES

"THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX." Took the greatest emotional toll on its young lead.



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TRANSFORMERS – G 11:00, 1:50,4:30,7:10,9:50	FANTASTIC 4 - G 11:50,1:45 BUG - R13 3:35, 5:50,8:05,10:20	TRANSFORMERS – G 11:40, 2:20,5:00,7:50,10:20

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② TRANSFORMERS MTRCB GP 12:00, 2:50, 5:40, 8:30	④ TRANSFORMERS MTRCB GP 1:00, 3:50, 6:40, 9:30

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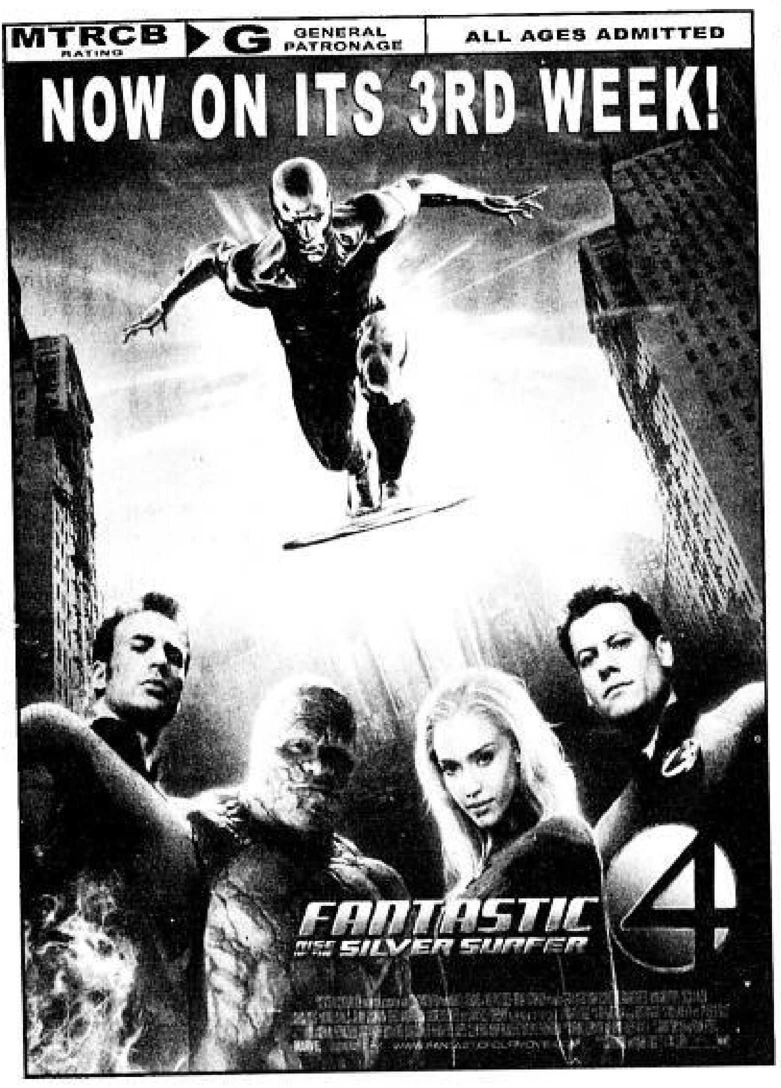
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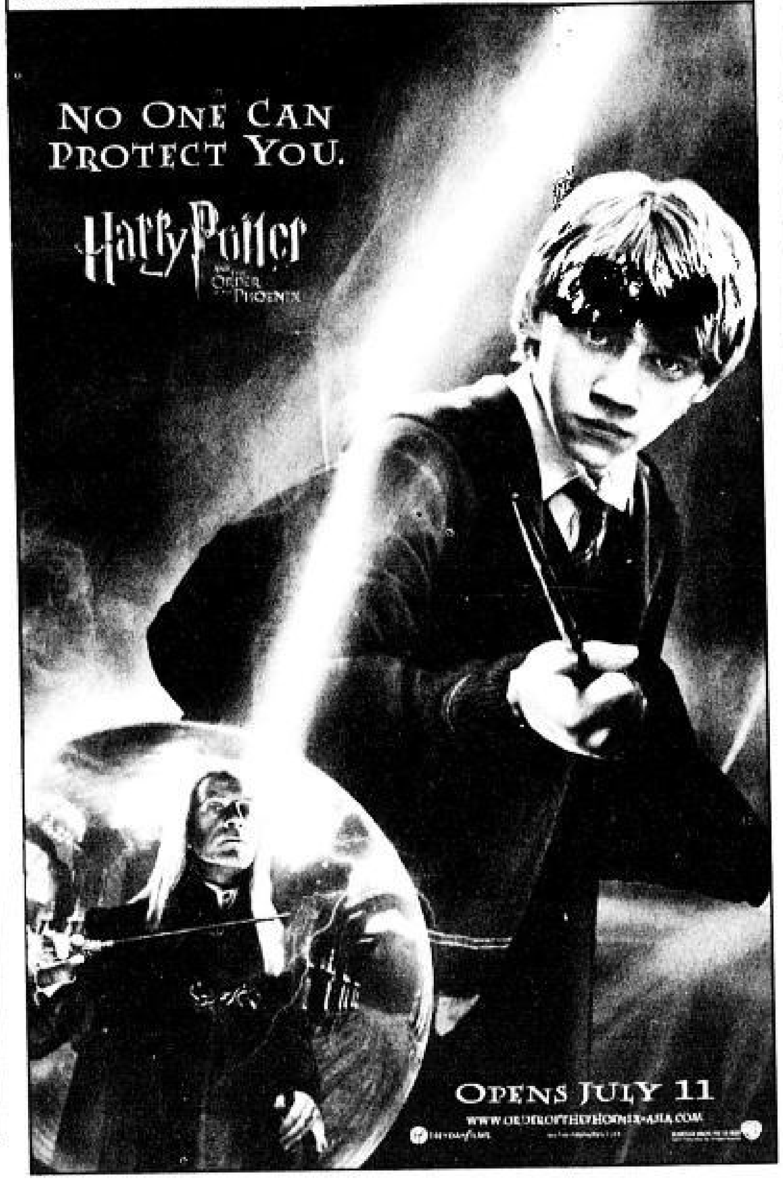
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4	TRANSFORMERS	1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 10:20	GP

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	3	BUG
	4	TRANSFORMERS
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1	TRANSFORMERS
	2	TRANSFORMERS
	3 THX	TRANSFORMERS GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	BUG
	5	FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER
	6	TRANSFORMERS
	7	TRANSFORMERS
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1	FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER
	2	TRANSFORMERS
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX	TRANSFORMERS GUARANTEED SEATS
	2 THX	TRANSFORMERS GUARANTEED SEATS
	3	TRANSFORMERS GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	TRANSFORMERS GUARANTEED SEATS
	5	TRANSFORMERS GUARANTEED SEATS
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX	TRANSFORMERS GUARANTEED SEATS
	2	TRANSFORMERS
	3	TRANSFORMERS
	4	TRANSFORMERS
	5	FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER
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	2	TRANSFORMERS
	3	THE INVISIBLE
	4	TRANSFORMERS
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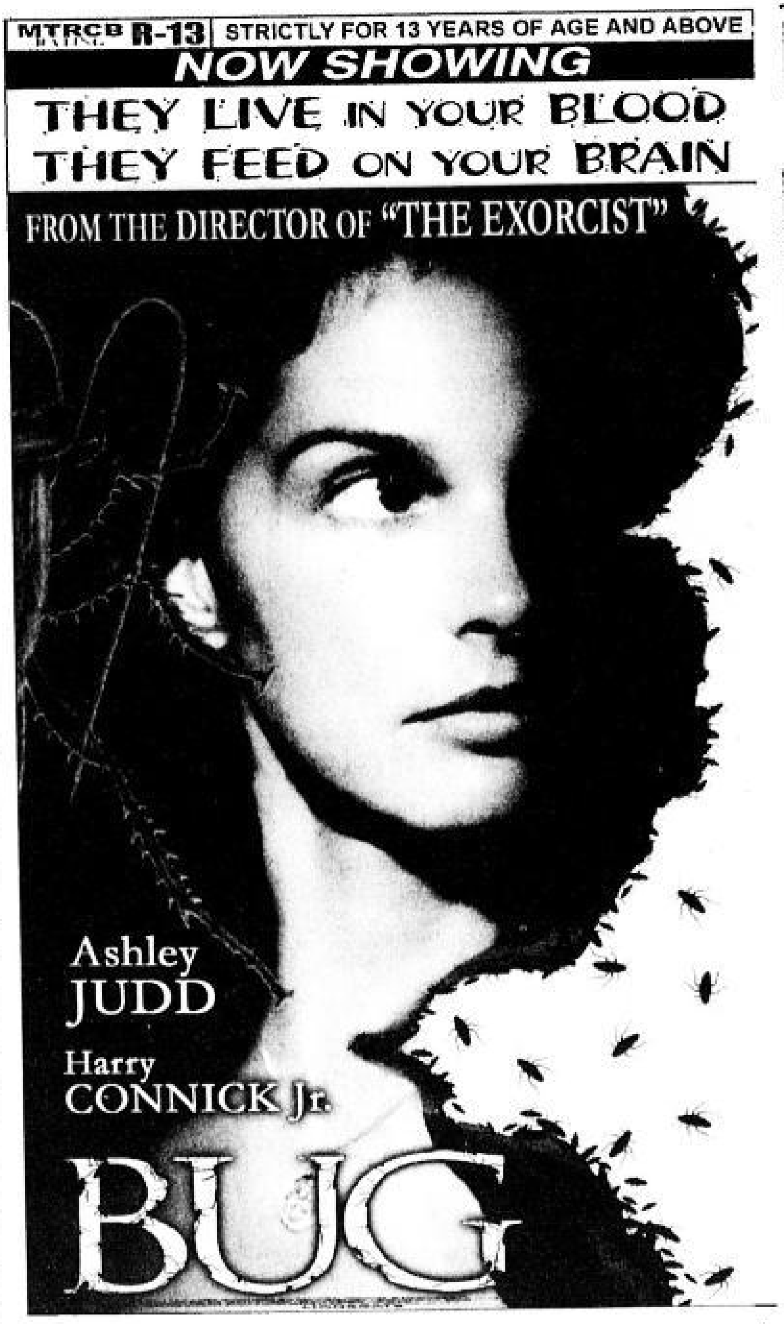

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1	NEXT 12:00 R2 / 1:45 / 3:50 / 5:55 / 8:00	2	TRANSFORMERS 12:00 / 2:40 / 5:20 / 8:00	3	FANTASTIC 4: SILVER SURFER 12:10 R3 / 1:50 / 4:10 / 6:30 / 8:50
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"LASSIE." Man's best friend is a popular film subject.

Movie lists *for* all reasons—and seasons

By Nestor U. Torre

JAMES STEWART. Spread hope and Christmas cheer in "It's A Wonderful Life."

PEOPLE WATCH MOVIES FOR all sorts of reasons, and different film types have been devised to fill a wide range of viewing needs and expectations—for all seasons. Even better, lists have been made of movie titles that fill each bill, to wit:

Movies about Santa Claus? Take your pick of "Miracle on 34th Street," "A Christmas Story," "Bad Santa," "The Hebrew Hammer," "Silent Night, Deadly Night," "Don't Open Till Christmas," "You Better Watch Out," "The Santa Clause"—and "Santa Claus Conquers the Martians!"

Sinister

High on Horror? Chills and thrills are guaranteed by spooky productions like "Eyes Without A Face," "Black Sunday," "Night Tide," "Cat People," "The Seventh Victim," "Carnival of Souls," "The Nightcomers"—and the sophisticated and sinister "The Innocents."

Are you a fan of Charles Dickens' novels? Many of them have been put on film, to great acclaim: "Great Expectations," "Oliver!," "A Christmas Carol," "David Copperfield," "A Tale of Two Cities," "The Pickwick Papers," and "Little Dorrit."

Box of Kleenex

Tearjerkers? Arm yourself with a whole box of Kleenex as you watch "Brian's Song," "Bang the Drum Slowly," "I Never Sang for My Father," "Imitations of Life," "Stella Dallas," "Terms of Endearment," "Brief Encounter," "The Heart of Me," "The End of the Affair," and "Finding Neverland."

"WEST SIDE STORY." Adapted from William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet."

What about inspiring movies that feature angels? Fly high with "It's a Wonderful Life," "Defending Your Life," "Here Comes Mr. Jordan," "Angels in America," "Damn Yankees," "The Preacher's Wife," "Michael," "Angels in the Outfield," "The Bishop's Life," "Wings of Desire," "Dogma," "The Horn Blows at Midnight," "Barbarella," and "The Prophecy."

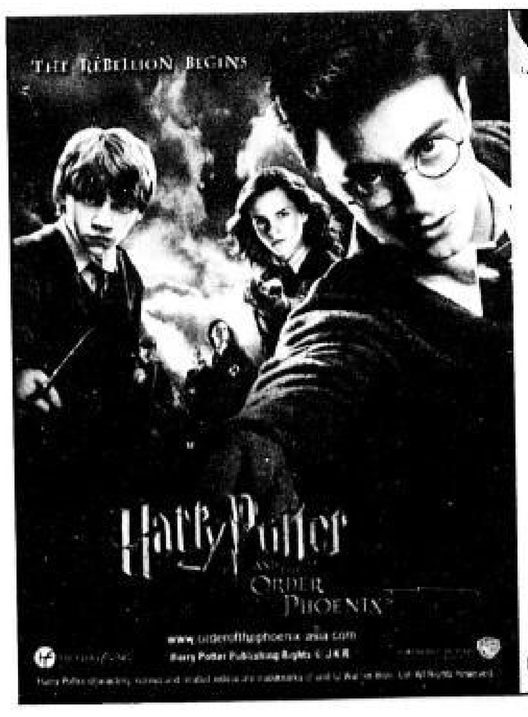
Movies about *le* ballet? Dance up a beautiful storm with "The Red Shoes," "Shall We Dance?," "The Turning Point," "Billy Elliot," "The Company," "Suspiria," "The Children of Theatre Street," and "Ballet Russes."

Plays

What about films adapted from Shakespeare's plays? "Throne of Blood," "Ran," "Kiss Me, Kate," "10 Things I Hate About You," "West Side Story," "Forbidden Planet" (adapted from "The Tempest"), and even "My Own Private Idaho," which reworks portions of "Henry IV, Parts I and II."

Our favorite list is made up of movies about man's best friend. Go happily to the dogs with "Napoloen," "Lassie Come Home," "Air Bud," " A Dog of Flanders," "The Incredible Biscuit Eater," the "Benji" movies, "A Boy and His Dog," and "Baxter."

—*Woof!*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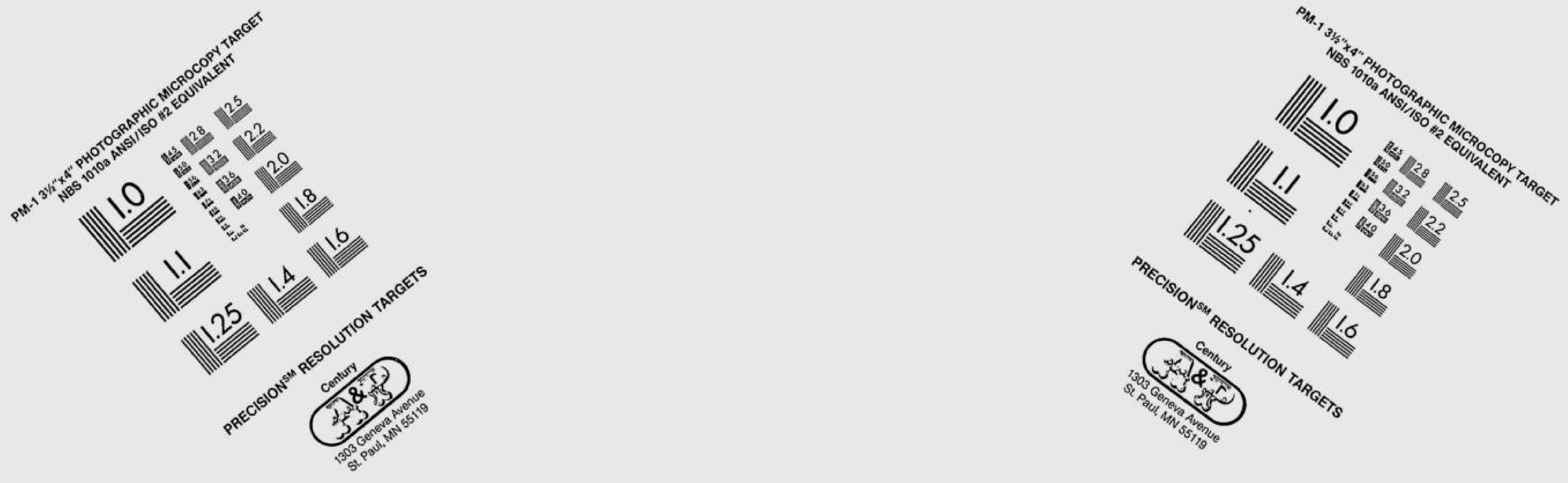
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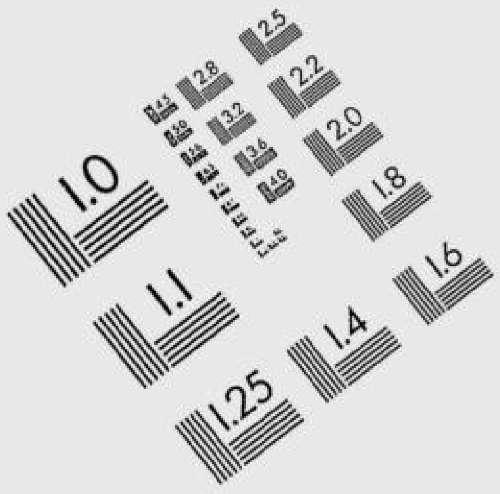
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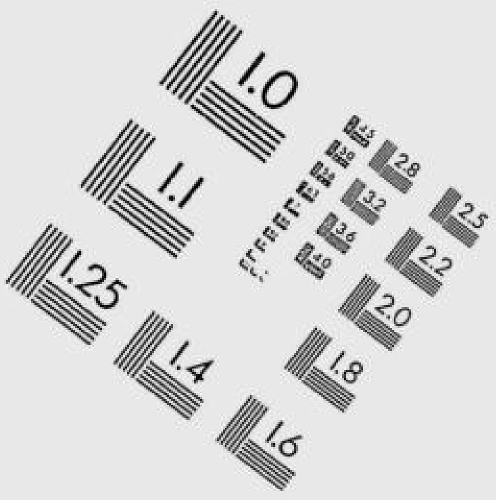
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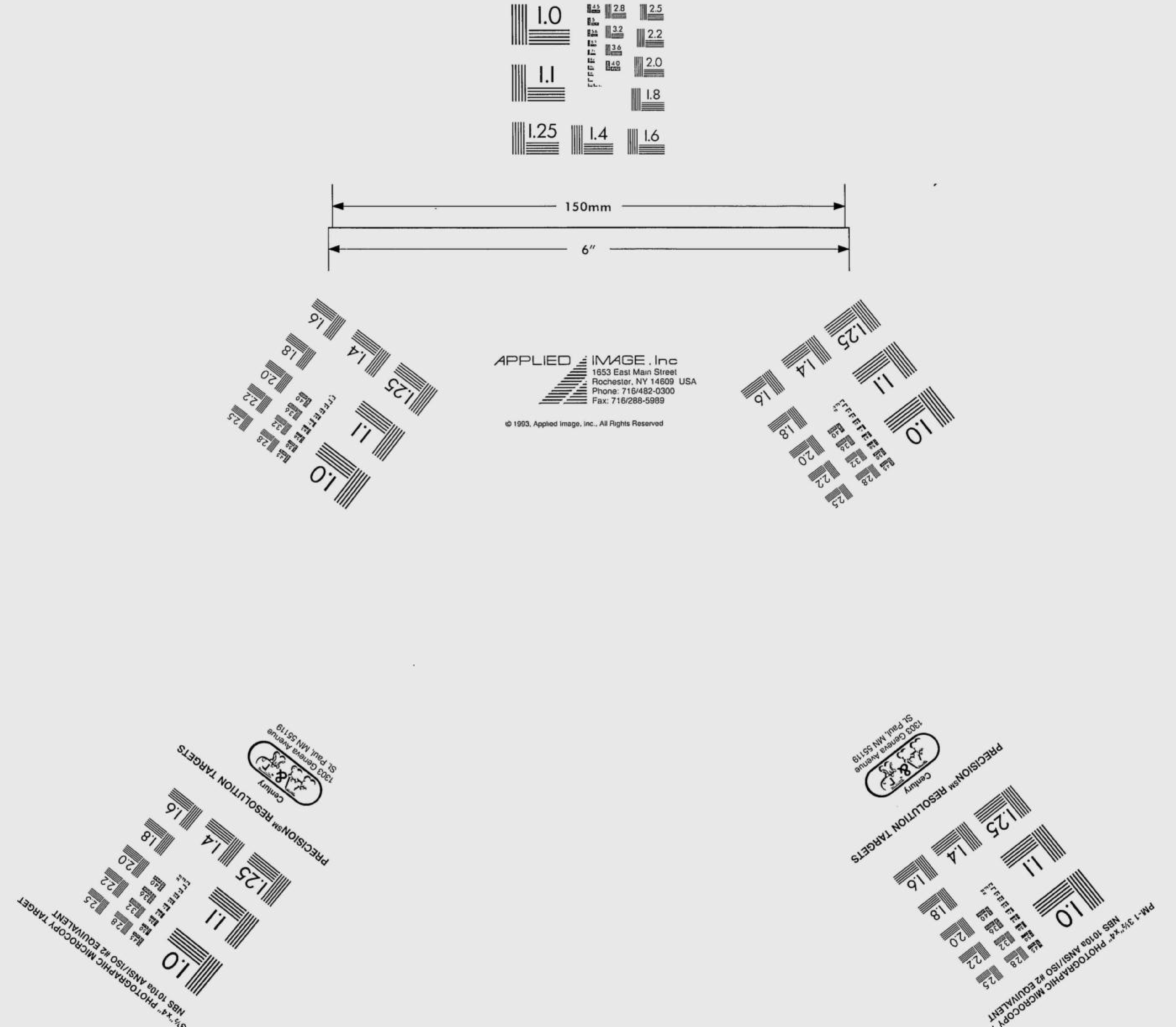
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, PHILIPPINES

JUNE
16 THRU 30
2007

REEL 407

END

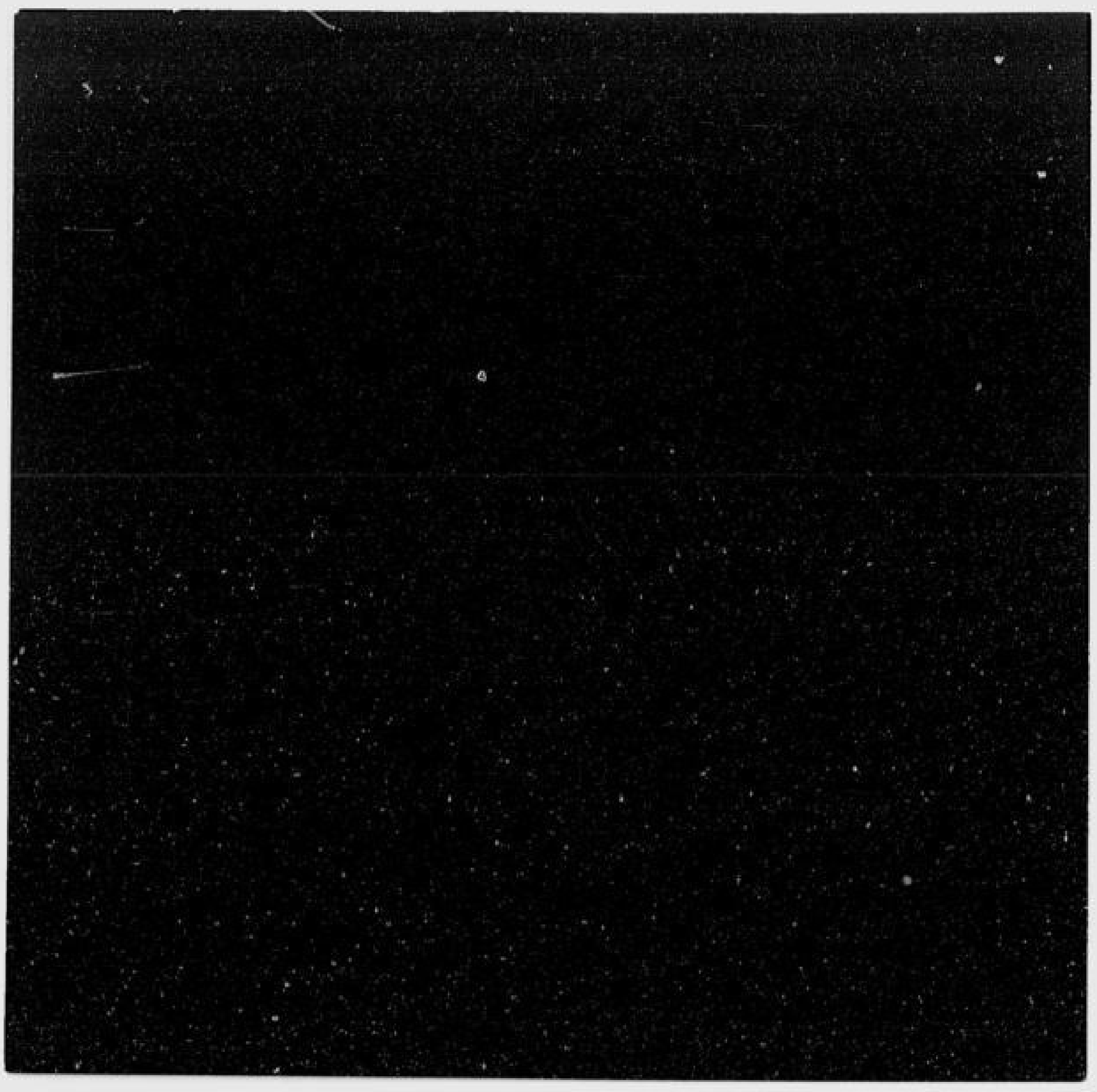
PLEASE REWIND

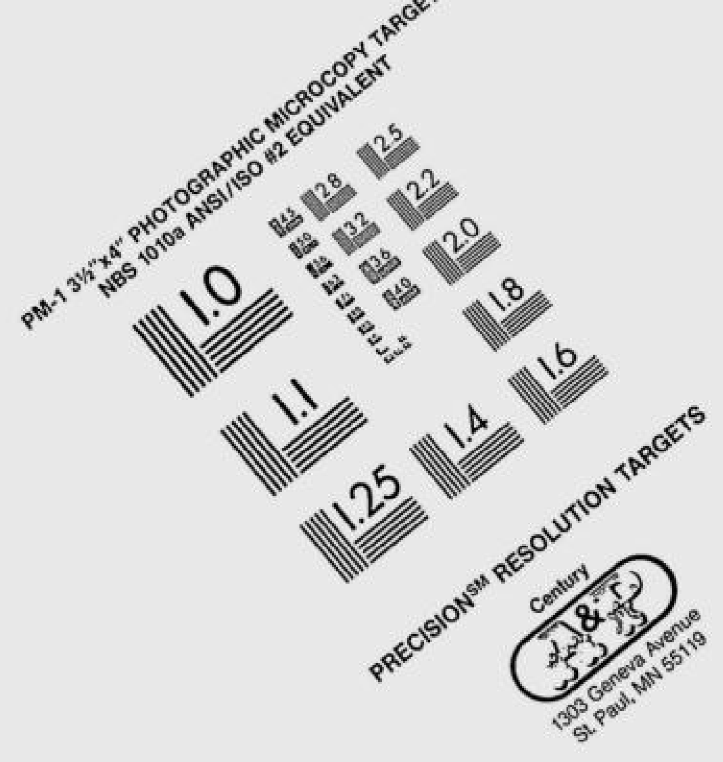
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, PHILIPPINES

MARCH
1 THRU 15
2007

REEL 400

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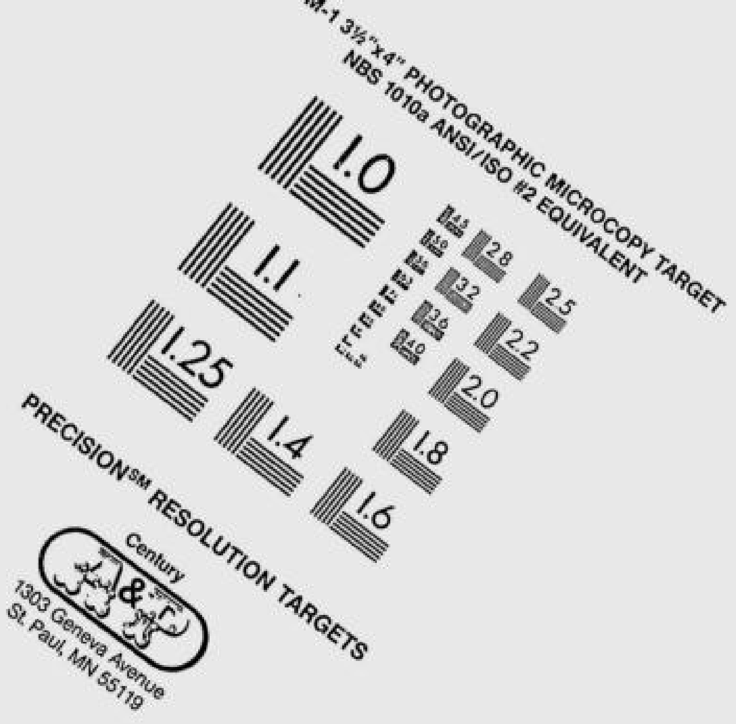
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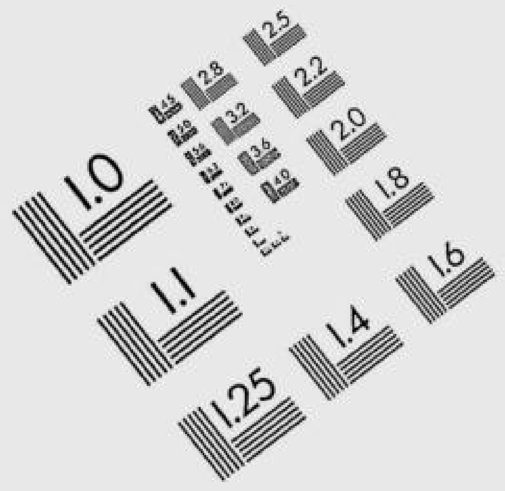
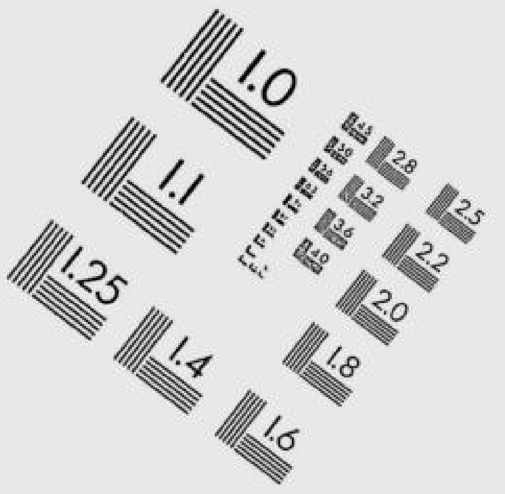
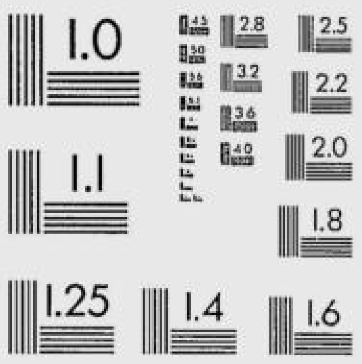
IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)



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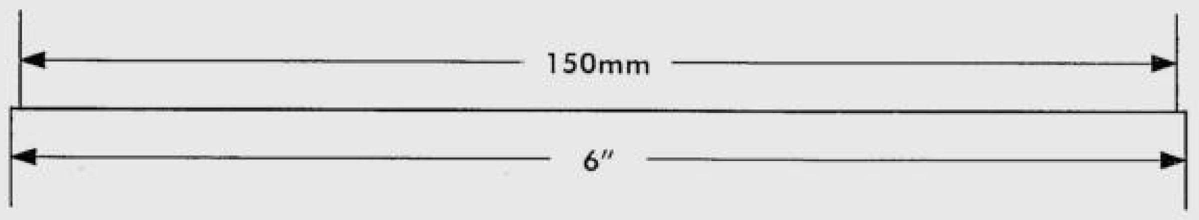

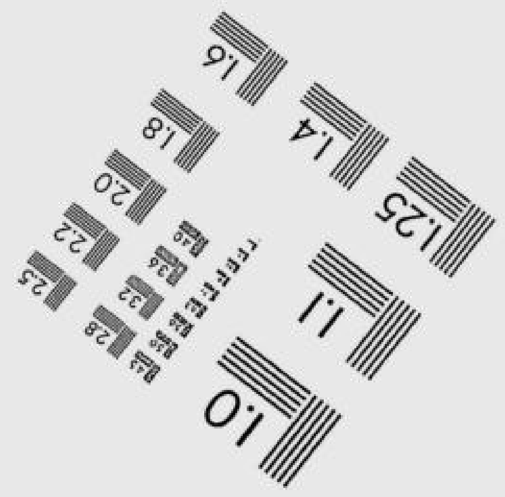

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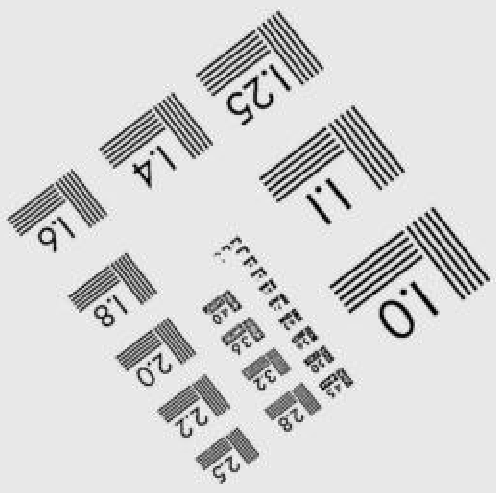

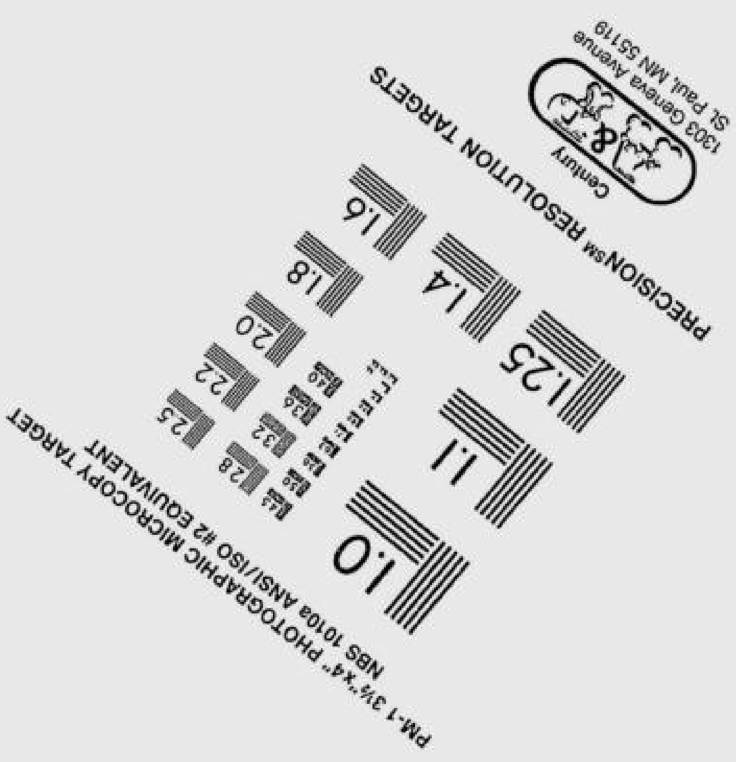
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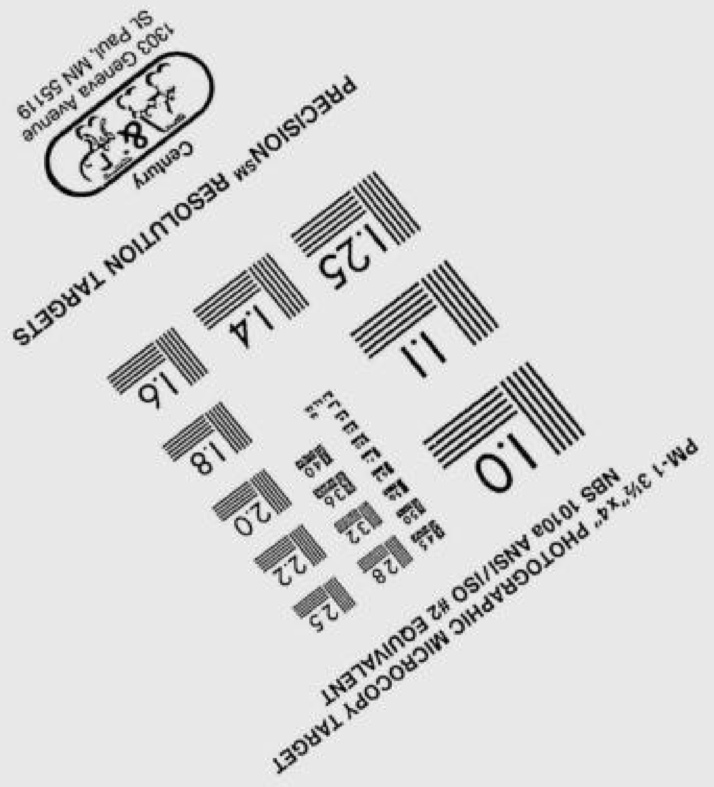
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